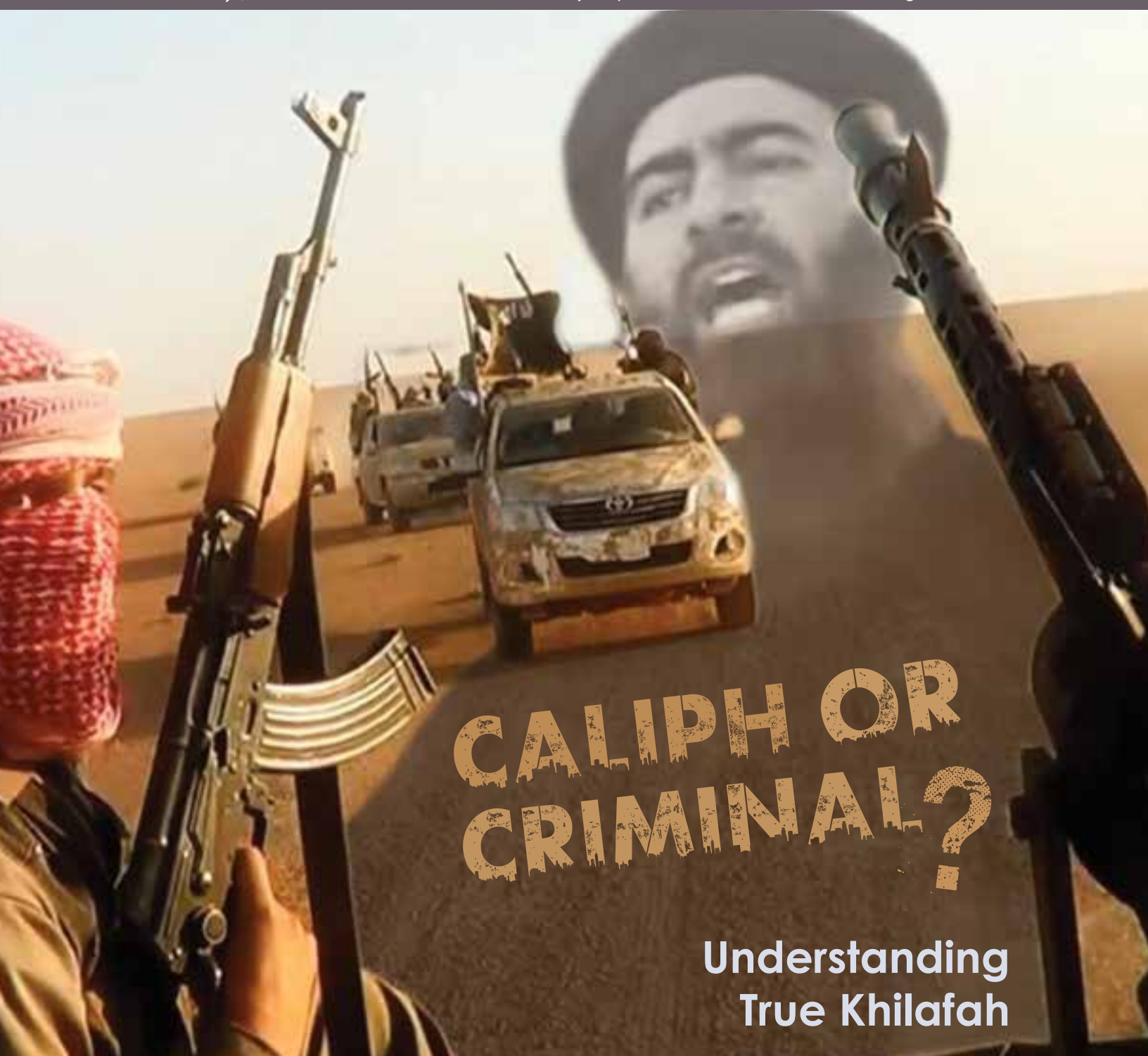


"In the Latter Days, the sun shall rise from the West" • Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be on him)



CALIPH OR CRIMINAL?

Understanding True Khilafah

The End of Political
Khilafat in Islam

16

Resurrecting Khilafah -
The Legitimate Heirs

25

Establishment of Shari'ah
through Khilafat

30

ISIS Khilafat:
Why it will not Establish?

36

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community



Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908)



AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY

United States of America

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a religious organization, international in its scope, with branches in 195 countries in Africa, North America, South America, Asia, Australasia, and Europe. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was established in 1889 by Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) (1835-1908) in Qadian, a small and remote village in the Punjabi province of India. He claimed to be the expected reformer of the latter days, the Awaited One of the world community of religions (The Mahdi and Messiah).

The Movement he started is an embodiment of the benevolent message of Islam – peace, universal brotherhood, and submission to the Will of God – in its pristine purity.

Hadrat Ahmad(as) proclaimed Islam as the religion of man: “The religion of the people of the right path” (98:6). The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was created under divine guidance with the objective to rejuvenate Islamic moral and spiritual values. It encourages interfaith dialogue, diligently defends Islam and tries to correct misunderstandings about Islam in the West. It advocates peace, tolerance, love and understanding among followers of different faiths. It firmly believes in and acts upon the Qur’anic teaching:

“There is no compulsion in religion” (2:257).

It strongly rejects violence and terrorism in any form and for any reason. After the passing of its founder, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been headed by his elected successors. The present Head of the Community, Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, was elected in 2003. His official title is Khalifat-ul-Masih V or Fifth Successor of the Promised Messiah.

www.alislam.org



Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih V

The Muslim Sunrise

www.muslimsunrise.com

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Muslims follow the name of God's prophets with the prayer *alaehis salaam* or 'may peace be upon him,' and for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, *sallallahu alaehi wasallam* or 'may peace and blessings of God be upon him.' Companions of prophets and righteous personalities who have passed away are saluted by *radhi-Allahu anhu/a* or 'may Allah be pleased with him/her.' While such salutations sometimes are not set out in the text for readability, we encourage readers to offer these prayers as if set out in full.

Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq (1872-1957) was the first Ahmadiyya Muslim missionary to arrive in America. In 1921, he founded the Muslim Sunrise, which stands today as the longest running Muslim publication in America. The magazine seeks to open discussions on Islam and topics relating to religion in general. It highlights the role of Islam in an ever changing global society. It provides a platform for public opinion on contemporary issues and presenting their solutions from an Islamic perspective.



Departments

Editorial (7)

Spiritual Treasures (19)

Religion & Science(33)

News, Views & Reviews (46)

Questions & Answers (50)

Perspective (52)

In This Issue

Friday Sermon Synopsis Oct 31st 2014 Delivered by Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad	08
Promise of Khilafat in the Holy Qur'an By Aasim Ahmad	14
The End of Political Khilafat in Islam By Hassan Khan	16
Resurrecting Khilafah - The Legitimate Heirs By Naser-ud-Din Shams	25
Establishment of Shari'ah through Khilafat By Imam Rizwan Khan	30
ISIS Khilafat: Why it will not Establish? By Arif Humayun	36
Divine Guidance brings in the New Khalifah By Rabia Khan	40
Khilafat among Muslim Sufi Orders By Mubasher Ahmad	42

FROM THE HOLY QUR'AN

أَمَّنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَالَهَا
أَنْهَارًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ
الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا ۚ ءِإِلَهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ ۚ
بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ②

أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ
وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ
الْأَرْضِ ۚ ءِإِلَهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ③
أَمَّنْ يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ
وَمَنْ يُرْسِلِ الرِّيحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ
رَحْمَتِهِ ۚ ءِإِلَهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ ۚ تَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا
يُشْرِكُونَ ④

أَمَّنْ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ
وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ
ءِإِلَهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ ۚ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ⑤

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

[27:62] Or, Who made the earth a place of rest, and placed rivers in its midst, and placed upon it firm mountains, and put a barrier between the two waters? Is there a God besides Allah? Nay, most of them know not.

[27:63] Or, Who answers the distressed person when he calls upon Him, and removes the evil, and makes you successors in the earth? Is there a God besides Allah? Little is it that you reflect.

[27:64] Or, Who guides you in every kind of darkness of the land and of the sea, and Who sends the winds as glad tidings before His mercy? Is there a God besides Allah? Exalted is Allah above what they associate with Him.

[27:65] Or, Who originates creation, and then repeats it and Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? Is there a God besides Allah? Say, 'Bring forward your proof if you are truthful.'



IN THE WORDS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^(as)

Divine Promise of Khilafat

[Shahadat-ul-Qur'an, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 6, pp.352-356]

There are other verses, which also indicate that it is God's design that spiritual teachers, who are the heirs of the Prophets, should always continue to be available.

For instance:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا
اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ

Meaning: 'O True believers among the followers of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), Allah has promised those among you who believe and act righteously, that He will surely make them successors in the earth, as He made successors among those who were before them.' [24:56]

وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
تُصِيبُهُمْ بِمَا صَنَعُوا قَارِعَةٌ أَوْ تَحُلُّ
قَرِيبًا مِنْ دَارِهِمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ وَعْدُ اللَّهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ

'Those who disbelieve will continue to be afflicted with a calamity, physical or spiritual, or would descend close to their dwellings till the Divine promise is fulfilled. Surely Allah doeth not contrary to His promise.' [13:32]

وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّى نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا ۝١٦

'And We send not a punishment till after We have raised a Messenger.' [17:16]

If a person reflects upon these verses he will realize that God Almighty has clearly promised the Muslims a permanent Khilafat. If this Khilafat were not permanent there would have been no sense in describing it as resembling the Khilafat of the Mosaic dispensation.

A Khalifah is a reflection of a Prophet. As man is mortal, God Almighty designed that Prophets, who are more exalted and honoured than all other beings, should be reflectively preserved forever. For this purpose, God instituted Khilafat so that the world should at no time be deprived of the blessings of Prophethood.



He who limits it to thirty years, foolishly overlooks the true purpose of Khilafat, and does not realize that God did not design that the blessings of Khilafat be limited to thirty years after the death of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and that, thereafter, the world may go to ruin....

There are many other verses in the Holy Qur'an, which give tidings of a permanent Khilafat among the Muslims, and there are also several Ahadith to the same effect. But what I have said already should suffice for those who accept established verities as great wealth.

There is no worse concept concerning Islam than to say that it is a dead religion whose blessings were confined only to its beginning. Can the Book that opens the door of perpetual good fortune inculcate so discouraging a doctrine that there is no blessing or Khilafat in the future and that everything has been confined to the past? True, there will be no independent Prophets among the Muslims. But if there were also to be no Khulafa' to demonstrate the proofs of spiritual life from time to time, that would spell the end of spirituality in Islam....It causes one's heart to tremble to imagine that Islam has now died and that no such people would arise in it, whose spiritual manifestations would be a substitute for miracles and whose inspiration a substitute for revelation, let alone that a Muslim should believe in any such possibility as a doctrine. May God Almighty guide those who are involved in such misguided thinking.

Shahadat-ul-Qur'an,
[Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 6, pp.352-356]



EDITORIAL

WINTER 2014

Throughout the history of religion, after the passing away of prophets, devoted and inspired individuals continued the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. After Moses(as), Joshua continued the struggle of taking the Children of Israel to the Promised Land for which Moses(as) had initiated their journey. After Jesus(as), St. Peter continued his mission to reform the Jews in accordance with the teachings of Gospel of Jesus(as). These individuals were the successors of their respective prophets known as khulafā [sing: khilafah] in the Islamic terminology.

After the passing away of Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa), Hadrat Abu Bakr(ra) took charge of spreading the message of Islam and the final Law of God given to Prophet Muhammad(sa). After 30 years of this Khilafat, the leadership evolved into monarchs who also referred to themselves as khulafā, and continued to do so until the nineteenth century when the position of Khalifah had dwindled to a ceremonial post. In 1924, the political usage of the term khalifah was abolished.

Muslims have tried to bring back the system of khilafat(an Urdu word meaning *succession*, or *Khilafah* in Arabic) to its original glory from time to time in various parts of the world. Most recently in Iraq, an organization referred to as ISIS has started the campaign to re-establish khilafat, with its leader even self-appointing himself to the position of Khalifah of Islam.

Here a few historical points are worthy of note. The system of khilafat was predicated upon the appearance of a prophet. It was never an institution for people to get together and organize as if they were forming some club, government or social group. Instead of self-appointment, it was always the closest friends, disciples and followers of the prophet

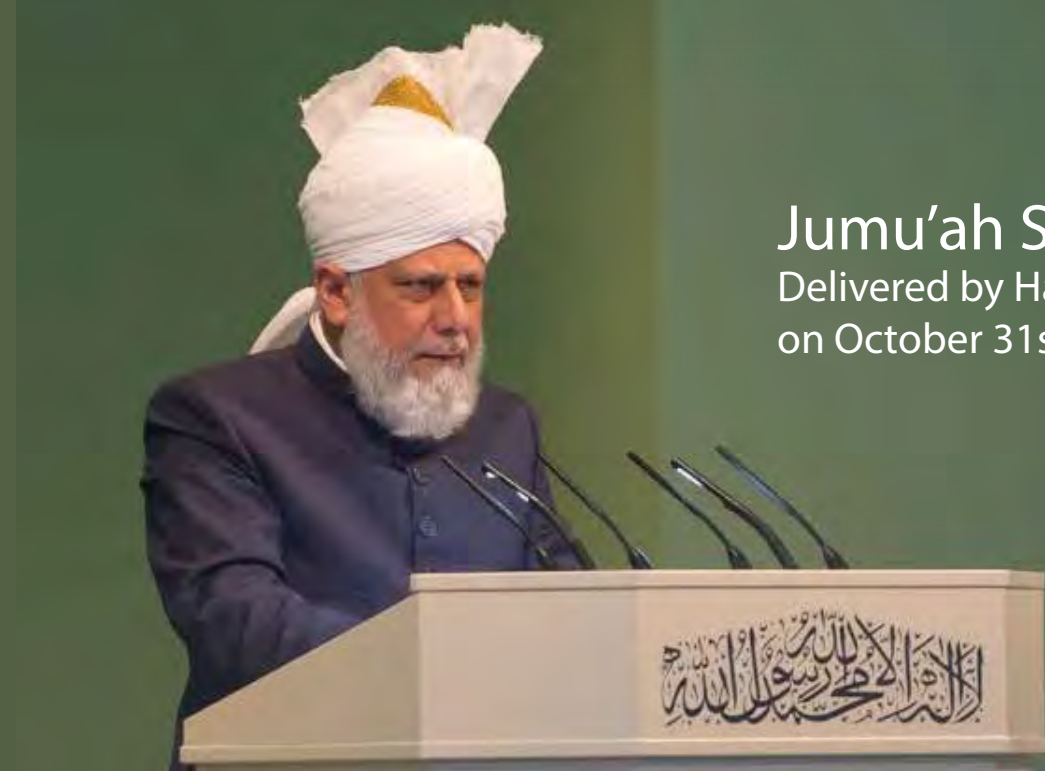
who chose a worthy khalifah for the continuation of the prophet's goals and objectives.

Allah has stated in the Holy Quran that He establishes khilafat among the people who believe and do good works. Therefore, there has to be a group of believers who deserve the divine khilafat. That is the group which is prepared by a prophet of God, upon whom Allah bestows the blessings of khilafat. By definition, it cannot be a group of people who are involved in murder, killing of innocents, taking hostages and creating terror and havoc among their neighbors.

In our times, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) appeared as the Messiah and Mahdi who achieved the status of a prophet by following the teachings and example of Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa). He was able to establish a community of individuals who were transformed into pious, sincere believers in God and the Day of Judgment, and promoters of benevolence and good works. Allah bestowed khilafat upon them after passing away of Hadrat Ahmad(as). This is the only khilafat today which is based on the appearance of a prophet among individuals who are believers and do good works.

Muslims need to look into this khilafat that is established by God and has a track record of over 100 years. They can achieve the glory of the past by following the Khalifah of the time, doing good works and genuinely extending mercy and service to humanity.

In this issue we have presented articles in reference to the concept and establishment of khilafat. Hopefully, this issue will provide readers the insight to understand True Khilafat, and why any other person donning the title khalifah is doomed to fail if his group lacks the roots of a Divine Prophethood.



Jumu'ah Sermon Synopsis

Delivered by Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad
on October 31st 2014

Allah, the Exalted, says in the Holy Quran: You are the best people raised for the good of mankind (3:111).

Huzur Aqdas (ab) says you are those people who have been raised for the good of other people and for their beneficence. This is, from among the duties of Muslims, one of the biggest responsibilities that the world should be benefitted by them. The world should receive from them goodness and beneficence and not harm or evil. However, at this time, the situation in which the world finds itself, that we observe, that the Muslim governments, peoples and organizations have created so much disorder that a large part of the world is fearful of the name of Islam and the Muslims. And if such a fearful situation exists then who is it that would want to listen to what the Muslims want to convey or should think that we may receive some goodness or benefit from them.

The people who are cutting the throats of their own people and are killing innocents, women, children, and the aged without any regard, and without any reason, illegally and who are enslaving those who do not share their way of thinking; how can it be expected from them that they could be such as would wish for good for the non-Muslims.

Thus these acts that such people carry out, can, and in fact do, result inevitably in only this that the world is fearful of Muslims.

For us Ahmadis there is, in this, a lot to feel ashamed and sad about that our Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), who is a Mercy for the Universe, is the one that such people ascribe themselves to while doing such misdeeds. They have brought infamy upon the religion of Islam and they are also presenting the Holy Prophet to the world in a totally wrong way contrary to his real exemplary nature. Nevertheless, as an Ahmadi we are not at all dismayed nor do we lose hope seeing these misdeeds of their.

When I present these things, these misdeeds of the Muslims, to most non-Muslims as an argument in favor of the truth of the Holy Prophet of Islam because the Holy Prophet had said that a time will come when the condition of the Muslims will be precisely this - in fact he had also identified the age when this would happen. He had indicated that this downward trend would begin after such a length of time and had foretold for how long such a night of darkness would last and then the Promised Messiah (as) would appear and rejuvenate the true and beautiful teachings of Islam in the world again. That teaching which is still present in its true form in the Holy Quran and every word of which teaching we see reflected in the exemplary life of the Holy Prophet (sa). And we Ahmadis believe that in this era of misguidance, in accordance with the prophecies of the Holy Prophet, that Promised Messiah and Mahdi has indeed appeared. And he did not just make the claim of having come but in his person, and with his advent, were fulfilled all the signs that the Holy Quran and the Sayings of the Holy Prophet had mentioned.

And this Promised Messiah and Mahdi introduced us to the beautiful teachings of Islam and lit up our hearts with its illumination. Today it is this Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya that is acting on these beautiful teachings of Islam. When the people are told these things, they become convinced that Islam is not false but rather the actions of these people are at fault who are spreading chaos and disorder in the world in the name of Islam.

So every Ahmadi must remember that to call the world to goodness and being desirous of good for everyone is the responsibility of every Ahmadi because Allah, through His Grace and Favor has bestowed upon us the bounty of having accepted the Promised Messiah (as).

It is not our duty to just live in peace. Our duty is not only to stay away from any misdeeds. We are not required to simply stay away from chaos and disorder. But it is our responsibility to work to the fullest extent possible to bring about and establish peace in the world. It is also our responsibility to try and stop the world from committing misdeeds and perpetrating evil. To keep the world away from chaos and disorder and to help them avoid these things is also our job because these works are part of the work of the Promised Messiah (as). He was sent to rejuvenate the tradition of doing good and spreading goodness in the light of the Islamic teachings. So doing good to the people and entering into a bai'at of the Promised Messiah (as), and the command of God Almighty, require from us that we come into the world of actions and do everything in our power to be a source of goodness and beneficence and for preventing evil and misdeeds for the people of the world.

We are the well-wishers of the Muslims also. We desire good for them. We are also the well-wishers of the non-Muslims and we desire good for them also. We are the well-wishers of the Christians also and the Jews and the Hindus and the followers of other religions. Indeed, we are the well-wishers even of the atheists. Because we have to show to all of them that path which can take them close to God Almighty. Indeed we have to desire and wish for good for all people involved in every kind of evil, thieves and robbers, and those guilty of committing every kind of excess simply because these are all the creatures of the Lord of all the Worlds and we are required to be the well wishers of all creatures of God Almighty. And we have to show them the paths that lead to goodness and that avoid misdeeds and evil.

By saying 'ukh-ray-jat lin-naas' [for the whole of mankind] Allah has made our field of actions very vast. So for the good of humanity and for their benefit and improvement we have to show them the right paths that lead to God Almighty.

We have to urge them to follow and act upon the commandments of God Almighty.

We have to tell them that this life will come to an end one day and then everyone will receive the reward or punishment of his or her actions on the Day of Judgement. So establish your connection with God Almighty so that you may have a better end. But we cannot make anyone understand these things till we ourselves do not become such as keep a watch on our end, our final outcome. This is a very great duty that we have to fulfill and carry out with great care, thought and regular assessments.

During the carrying out of this task we will have to, and indeed we do, face difficulties and the history of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at tells us that we have been confronting such difficulties and the oppositions of the world at every step of the way. But this is not just something that is peculiar to us alone. Indeed, all the Prophets of God who came, they and those who believed in them, had to face such opposition, but because those earlier Prophets had come for limited epochs and limited areas, so their oppositions were also of a limited nature.

However, the Holy Prophet (sa), when he was sent into the world, he was sent for the entire world. This is why we see that the whole world opposed him and indeed continues to do so. And this is the same work and scope of the work that applies to the Promised Messiah (as) in the servitude of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). This is why when he made his claim he was opposed by people of every faith and nation and they are still opposing him even today. In some places this opposition is moderate and in some places it is severe. And this will go on and it has not come to an end nor will it.

There are no doubt such people in the world who praise the work the Ahmadiyya Jama'at does to promote peace but with reference to faith, when we will be blessed with extraordinary progress, then as a people, we will have to face opposition in the Western countries also. Or, at the least, those who are the practitioners of religion here, we will face oppositions from them. So it should never be thought that in these countries populated with educated people, our good deeds, good actions will always be replied to with goodness. Even now there are such churches here where the pastors oppose us and their authorities do not desire to even sit with us.

In February, the religious conference that took place here, the people from Church of England were also invited but they did not deign even to respond and they did not come. There are many places where our outreach teams go, in other countries also, and one or two times they give them permission to use

their facilities in small places to gather the people and to state our purpose and intentions and objectives, but when they see that we go to that area again and again, and the people are beginning to pay heed to our message, then they begin to come out in opposition to us.

The same is the attitude of authors who are atheists or who hold on to no religion when they see us writing in defence of Islam. They respond with great ferocity in opposition. And as the numbers of the Jama'at will increase, this opposition too will continue to rise. But the Prophets of God are also convinced that in the end they will be the ones who will prevail because God has implanted this certainty in them.

And the Promised Messiah (as) too had this certainty also as God Almighty had made this clear upon him that he will indeed prevail. And we too are certain on the basis of these same things that the Promised Messiah (as) will indeed prevail, insha-Allah - by the will of Allah - because Allah does not break His Promises. And then there are innumerable acts of God, practical signs of the support of God that bear testimony to the fact that God is with him [the Promised Messiah (as)]. So there is no reason whatsoever that we should look upon the claims of the Promised Messiah (as) in any negative or worrisome way nor should we harbor any doubt about God's support.

The Jama'at has passed through such horrific things that had convinced its enemies that now this Jama'at was just about finished. But what was the result? Each time, the enemy, despite all its power and might, failed and the Jama'at, by the Grace of Allah, the Exalted, came out with its head held high, victorious.

So no matter what treatment the world meets out to us, this is their nature, their job, but because the help of God is with us, and because we are certain that we have to fulfill all His commandments that He has given, so we have, in every case, to continue to fulfill this command also and wish well for all and go on advancing our work. Our sentiments for the whole world must be of goodness and indeed our wishes are virtuous but if despite this the world causes us pain, inflicts pain upon us, even then we will not let the work we have to do to slow down because we have been bestowed the work of taking care of the world.

If Allah, the Exalted, has bestowed upon us the name of Khair-ul-Ummam, the Best People, so we will never step back from distributing goodness

And this goodness is the conveying of the message of Islam. It is to call the world towards Allah, the Exalted. What can be greater goodness than this. The amount of evil and filth and philandery and the amount of mocking and derision of the commandments of Allah, the Exalted, that is happening in these days and in this age, and the manner in which governments and the media are also spreading this, the world has never seen the like of it before. Today, the power with which Satan is making his attacks, perhaps it has never happened before that, from one end of the earth to the other, within a matter of seconds, pictures full of indecencies, and such stories and sounds can be made to reach everywhere.

When we raise our voices in support of goodness, the majority of the people are not at all moved to the least degree but the sounds of evil make their impact felt instantly. And even if someone does pay attention to what we have to say, then among them a lot are such, in fact the majority are such, as treat us as children are treated - they say, "well done, you are doing very good work" - and then these people lose contact with us and become involved in those things that take them away from goodness.

So we need to understand that this is not the height of achieving our objectives, that we should become satisfied upon hearing some small praise, like children, and then sit down and having conveyed our message to a few people imagine that we have accomplished some great feat. In fact, in order to render goodness to the world, to deliver goodness to the world, we have to take our efforts to remove evil and misdeeds to the very extreme.

Any worldly opposition, any worldly obstacle, whether it is from the Muslims or the non-Muslims, or from whomsoever it may come, even if it is from atheists - we have to try to remove it from our path in the way in which a strong wind blows away a piece of straw. From this we should be able to estimate how comprehensive, solid and passionate effort is needed on our part. And together with this, it is necessary that every Ahmadi, in accord with his or her abilities and capabilities, needs to contribute his or her part.

The task of the Promised Messiah (as) was to convey to the entire world the message of Islam and to distribute this goodness and beneficence to them all. So this is our task also. We should not be worried that the world does not pay attention to our calling them, does not hear us. We call them to goodness and they become even more engrossed in evil; and these misdeeds are directed at us from every quarter.

At this time especially, the opposition from among the Muslims to us is so much that it has exceeded all limits. No doubt there are such people also who have started to raise their voice somewhat in our favor. There are also some who, recognizing truth for being truth, and despite all the oppositions, they accept Ahmadiyyat, the True Islam. But it is also clear that the numbers of those devoted to creating discord and spreading mischief is very large or at least the decent people do not come out due to the fear of such mischief-makers - and these mischief-makers come out and do as they please.

But can we stop doing our work because of this opposition? Due to fear of the worldly oppositions, can we go back from carrying out this order of God Almighty that we should spread goodness? As I have said there are people in the world who confront all oppositions and overcome all satanic obstacles and accept Ahmadiyyat. There are among them those who say, while telling us about how they accepted Ahmadiyyat, that it was the very opposition to Ahmadiyyat that led them on to the path that led them to Ahmadiyyat.

In my previous sermon I had made mention of a poet with reference to Hadrat Khalifatul Masih II (ra) that that person, in order to find some reason to object to the Promised Messiah (as), had read some books of the Promised Messiah (as) - especially the Persian Durr-e-Sameen [collection of his poetry] and as a result accepted Ahmadiyya. He says that it had become manifest to him, as clearly as a bright sunshiny day, that there was no greater lover of the Holy Prophet (sa) to be seen than Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani (as).

So we are established on this certainty that when we will respond to evil with goodness, then from these very people themselves, droplets of love will begin to fall upon us and such people will embrace the servitude of the Messiah of Muhammad (sa). We have been taught by the Promised Messiah (as) that we should even pray for our enemies and desire good for them and deliver goodness to them, be of benefit to them.

This incident is also known to you all. It is a picture of the pain he felt for the faith in his heart. I had mentioned it in my previous khutbah also that despite the fact that Allah, the Exalted, had sent the plague as a sign in support of his claims, yet, when people began to die from it, he became concerned that if all the people died who would be left to worship God Almighty and who would be there to believe. So he started praying for the removal of this torment with such anguish and pain that those who heard him said that his cries were like those of a woman at the time of giving birth. So this is the example and standard that has been set before us by the true servant of the Holy Prophet (sa) in this age as to how to be the well wisher of the people of the world.

Instead of desiring the destruction of the world, he desired good for the world. That God Almighty is Possessor of All Powers and He can change the hearts of the people without resorting to destruction. So our efforts also need to be, following in the footsteps of the Promised Messiah (as) and his Lord and Master the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that the people may be saved from destruction so that they may become our brethren. We need to pray for this also with pain in our hearts. And we need also to make every effort. We have to set right the material and spiritual lives of the people by guiding the world to the right spiritual paths.

We do have to set people on the right path spiritually, of course, but I want to tell you also that we have been made responsible for delivering goodness and taking care of their material welfare too. And there are commandments in the Holy Quran about this also. We are not told to just take care of goodness for our own people only. We are not commanded just to end the hunger, and provide shelter and take care of the illnesses of our own people alone. We are commanded to take care of others also and indeed of every person in need.

Although the topic at the moment is mostly about the spiritual goodness, I have come to learn of one thing and so I wish to make mention of it here also. During the last few days an Ahmadi went from here to the Turkey Lebanon area to make an assessment of the needs of the refugees living in those areas. The condition of the people there is very bad. They need food and clothings and the education of their children is being affected negatively and there are different entities that are trying to provide them help. But their needs are very great.

In any case there, someone, an Ahmadi, made the criticism that why is the Ahmadiyya Jama'at helping Europeans, they should only be helping us.

Perhaps the reference of this person was towards the monies that we give to charities in Europe. So it needs to be said that here too, in accordance with this Quranic commandment, the service, provision of spiritual and material help, must be provided without distinction to everyone.

Allah, the Exalted, has said that you must feed the hungry one. It has not been said that an Ahmadi who is hungry, or a Muslim who is hungry must be fed, but rather it is said that every hungry person should be given food.

Allah has commanded that we fulfill the needs of a poor or needy person. So this too is our obligation, that we try to fulfill the need of every poor and needy person. We have to fulfill all these obligations. Such talk is unbecoming of a momin - a believer, that he should go around questioning why such a person was given and why another was not - in fact it is among the responsibilities of a momin - a believer - that, without distinction, he should serve everyone.

Secondly, the charity walks that we do here, many others join in these and these are the monies that are given to the charities. The others who join us, also contribute to our charities when they come. So from this point of view also it becomes the right of the local charities also that the work that they are doing for the service of humanity we too join with them in doing that work. We see in the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa) that even after he had been bestowed the station of Prophethood, he said that even if today I am called to help people not from among the Muslims, I would readily go to their help. He was referring to the pact that he had entered into in his youth, in Mecca, together with some others, to respond to the call for help by anyone being wronged.

So, as I have said, we have to continue to expand our circle of doing good to others, wider and wider rather than limiting it. We do not look to the world for any compensation in return for the material help we provide them, nor do we want something in return for spreading the spiritual goodness among them. If we have a pain, and a longing, it is only that the world should recognize its Creator - the One who brought them into being. And by sharing this goodness and distributing it among the people, as is the practice of the Prophets of God, this is the reply that the Prophets have been giving and this is what we have been taught, that my reward is with Allah, the Exalted, I do not ask any reward from you.

So this is the answer that the Jama'at must give and also we must keep in mind that when the Prophets of God say this after having distributed goodness among the people, that my recompense is with Allah, the Exalted, yet a very large number of people continue still to oppose the Prophets of

God, and their number goes on increasing still.

So we should remember that as a result of our goodness, we may well receive as recompense from our ill natured opponents, loss and suffering and this does happen too. Indeed, some look at us as a lion looks at a goat thinking how did this prey come in our reach. Our situation is very much like that of the person who should have reared a lion or a cheetah and it manages somehow to escape. So the owner will be try to capture it in such a way that that animal suffers no harm but the cheetah will be trying to attack the owner and kill it.

So, in Pakistan, and in some other countries, there are such people, indeed all mullahs and the people under their influence are such people, who attributing lies to us, wish to tear us apart. But our effort is all directed towards trying to somehow save them so they do not come under the curse and seizing of God Almighty.

The opposition demonstrated by these people to us is not by virtue of any personal reasons. Various Ahmadis in various areas continue to receive threats, day in and day out that we will do this to you or that, so it is best if you repent of Ahmadiyyat and join hands with us. So their enmities are not because of our persons, but rather because of our adherence to Ahmadiyyat and their enmity to Ahmadiyyat is due to the fact that they can see clearly that the progress of Ahmadiyyat runs counter to their personal interests and the likely diminution in the attention that people pay to them at the moment. As Ahmadiyyat continues to progress these people will continue to suffer decline. These people can see clearly that the way and the manner in which the Jama'at is making progress they will likely have control over us tomorrow. And as I have said before, that in these Western countries, or in those countries that are under their influence, the progress of the Jama'at will take them towards planning to oppose the Jama'at. In their thoughts perhaps there is the idea that Jama'at Ahmadiyya wishes to take control of governments and countries whereas the spreading of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at is not in the direction of taking possession of countries. Indeed the spread of Ahmadiyyat in these countries will be the means of the establishment and spread of peace and law and order.

In the Muslim countries, even when we say to the Muslims to join with the true servant of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sa), we say it to remove their worldly pains and sufferings and for their better final outcome. Similarly we say to the followers of the other religions of the world that we want to save you from the wrath of God Almighty.

The Promised Messiah (as) did not desire to see the world under his control, he did not mention his prevailing to mean this, nor did he pray for such domination. Nor, by uniting under Khilafat does the Jama'at talk about taking over worldly governments and have them under their control. Our purpose is to establish the government of God in the world and to spread the pure and holy teachings of the Holy Prophet all over the world.

We must always keep our eyes on the life of the Holy Prophet (sa) and the history of Islam. That despite the messages of goodness and beneficence from him, oppositions rose up against him and against his Companions and they were forced into battles. Despite all this, the Holy Prophet always only sought guidance and Mercy for the people. And he tried as far as possible that the world should receive only goodness from him and if the wars were forced upon him he undertook them only as a last resort and always avoiding every excess and always for the sake of defence and for reformation. And this too, in fact, was a means of bestowing goodness for them.

Despite the fact that, as we see in the Torah, the mention of the opposition of the people of Hadrat Ishaq against the children of Hadrat Ishmael. And the Jews and Christians undertook opposition of the Holy Prophet also for this same reason. Despite the fact that the Jews and Christians were in extreme opposition against each other. But against the Holy Prophet (sa) they would both come together and even now they do the same. It was due to this same thinking and reasoning that the Jews caused a lot of pain to the Holy Prophet in Medina but the Holy Prophet always wished good for them except where it was required by the governance of affairs and punishment was required and that too was for the sake of goodness for the others.

We should remember that in this age, when the Promised Messiah (as) has been sent as the representative of the Holy Prophet, this connection with difficulties and oppositions had also to be established. So we, those who have come into the bai'at with the Promised Messiah (as), we have to face oppositions and we are doing this. But, despite all this, we have to follow the example of the Holy Prophet (sa) and wish only good for the world.

Listening to these things some minds may well think that we will always just be facing oppositions. This is not the case either. I have said before also that the promises of prevalence are with the Promised Messiah (as) and we will insha Allah be given this domination, this prevalence, but not by relying on worldly powers; and we cannot fulfill any of our tasks by relying on the world. Indeed, how can we rely on the worldly inclined, because we are the ones who have been called the Best

of People. We are the ones who have to distribute goodness not the ones who are going to be receiving it from others. So, as I have said we are to receive this domination, this prevalence; but to receive this Grace we have to make efforts and for this the work that Allah, the Exalted, has allotted to us we will have to take that to the highest level. All that we have to do, we have to do relying on our efforts and by gaining the Graces of Allah, the Exalted. Relying on others, or having any kind of thought of reliance on worldly powers will be the cause of our downfall and we must remember this. Divine communities do not seek or get help from worldly powers.

What are the efforts through which we can gain success? These are those messages of goodness which I have already mentioned before. And this needs to be spread to every person in the world and by every Ahmadi, no matter what section of society he belongs to, and this is what is needed. We have to put ourselves into the work of outreach - of tabligh, of conveying the message. Labourer, trader, doctor, lawyer, scientists, teacher, farmer ...everyone, making use of wisdom has to take this message of goodness to the people of his or her own section of society so that the world may get to know of Ahmadiyyat, the True Islam. And this needs to be done before the time that the seeds of opposition start to be planted or start to grow in places where they have not yet arrived - so that we should have our roots already strongly established in such places. Before the hordes of Satan realize what is happening, the beautiful Islamic teachings of goodness and beneficence should already be prevalent in such places.

So this, today, is the work of the servants of the Messiah of Muhammad (sa) that by making use of wisdom and strenuous efforts and gaining the graces of Allah, the Almighty, they go and plant the Islamic teachings of goodness and beneficence in the hearts of everyone. Do your level best for this. It is necessary, in order to achieve this, that we increase the numbers of Daeen-ila-lah [callers to Allah] everywhere and make every one of them active in their work.

May Allah enable the members of the Jama'at and also the Nizam [organization/system] of the Jama'at to pay full attention towards this.

Aameen!



PROMISE OF KHILAFAT IN THE HOLY QUR'AN

Aasim Ahmad

Not long before his demise, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) the Promised Messiah, received a revelation from God about the future of his spiritual community: Jama'at Ahmadiyya. Allah revealed to him: I shall make this Jama'at who are your followers, prevail over others till the Day of Judgment. According to the Promised Messiah(as) in his book "The Will," this promise was to be fulfilled through the second manifestation of his advent (Ahmad 2005). This everlasting promise is the Khilafat, or the Caliphate, that began with Maulana Hakeem Nur-ud-Din(ra) and over a century later continues in the present with the fifth successor, Mirza Masroor Ahmad(aba) and will continue till the Day of Requital. Although this promise of khilafat or successorship to the Messiah of our age is a continuation of the khilafat of Prophet Muhammad(sa) the actual promise of Khilafat is much broader and has held true throughout man's history.

The promise of khilafat is detailed in the Qur'an in what is known as Ayat-e-Istikhlaf:

Allah had promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security and peace after their fear: They will worship Me, and they will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be the rebellious. (Surah Al-Nur, Verse 56)

Ayat-e-Istikhlaf along with the verses preceding, explains that the party of believers who obey Allah's commandments will be made into successors of Allah's bounty and guidance. This party will continue united under the guidance of the one chosen by Allah. This promise of spiritual and temporal leadership held true for the Muslim community after the demise of the Prophet(sa) with the Four rightly guided Caliphs, Abu Bakr(ra), Umar(ra), Uthman(ra), and Ali(ra). This promise, however, is contingent on Muslims offering the Salat, paying the Zaka'at, and remaining obedient to the Prophets(sa). Since the Holy Prophet(sa) is the one guide for all of mankind, it follows that Khilafat in some form or other must continue within Islam for the continued guidance of mankind.

The Islamic Khilafat has continued under the leadership of the Ahmadiyya community of the Promised Messiah(as). One of the primary purposes of the Ahmadiyya community is to fortify the spiritual system of Khilafat with a Community of believers mirroring the community of the Prophet(sa) in faith and devotion to Allah.

The true understanding of the promise of khilafat, however, is much more expansive than the promise for the Muslim community. Khilafat is of three different types, all of which have been promised to believers similar to Ayat-e-Istikhlaf. Caliphs can be Prophets, such as Adam(as) and David(as), who have been described as "Vicegerents" in the Qur'an.. There are then Khulafa who are subordinate Prophets, such as the Israelite Prophets after Moses(as). Lastly, there are non-prophet khulafa who are spiritual persons well learned in the religious law. The mission of the last group is to protect and preserve the law.

Given khilafat is a promise fulfilled by Prophets or non-prophets and describes a person who in the very least, is a protector of the source of guidance for man, it follows that the Qur'an describes as rebellious those who would remain ungrateful thereafter. The system of khilafat is a treasure as it unlocks unlimited bounties from on high.

Those who find and follow the guidance sent down by Allah, are given a unique chance at obtaining a closeness to Allah that leads only to success in this life as well as the next. However, only those who submit to the Will of Allah, becoming obedient and sincere in worship can truly become witness to the blessings bestowed by the promise of khilafat. The promise of khilafat is not unconditional and this is the reason, part of the Muslim community split and many were and continue to be led astray. Even today, many in the Muslim community struggle to find the manifestation of the promise of khilafat when it is right in front of them in the form of the Ahmadiyya Community.

As in the case of the Prophet Muhammad(sa) there could be no better appreciation of what a khalifah or caliph who is a prophet can do for a community. The Arabs were accustomed to a nomadic lifestyle, the complete opposite of unity. However, with the advent of the Prophet Muhammad(sa), nearly all of Arabia was brought together under a single banner. In fact, an entire culture and way of life representative of barbarism was turned on its head becoming one of the most civilized and innovative cultures in history that spread across the known world.

Khulafa prophet or non-prophets can be understood as harbingers and custodians of unity and peace. Hadrat Abu Bakr(ra), Umar(ra), Uthman(ra), and Ali(ra) are all exceptional examples of how non-prophet Khulafa not only protect the religious law, but maintain the security and peace of the believers. These four are responsible for putting the Holy Qur'an into text format and ensuring the legacy of the Prophet(sa) would be protected. As long as the community is obedient and grateful to Allah, they will reap the blessings in the form of khilafat. In other words, as long as the community is strong in faith, Allah will bestow safety and security to practice faith, but as people grow in disobedience and lose their way on the path of righteousness, their khilafat, their bonds and spirituality weakens to the point that, like glass, it can shatter and fracture. For this reason, the verse following Ayat-e-Istikhlaf lists the three main conditions for the promise of khilafat: observe prayer, pay the Zaka'at, and obey the messenger.



Three of the Khulafa mentioned, Umar(ra), Uthman(ra), and Ali(ra) were martyred by the self-professed Muslim Community. As a result, the Muslim community began to fracture and lose its way. In the same way before Islam, the Israelites martyred their khulafa who were prophets and earned Allah's wrath as a consequence of being rebellious. Although, in the case of Islam, Allah's promise of guidance remained through the system of mujaddidiyyat, the sending of reformers, the community at large remained in dissension and grew in its dissension for a millennium. It would remain this way until the advent of the Promised Messiah(as) which was not just a renewal of Allah's promise, but was a night of destiny (laylat-ul-qadr). During a time when the Muslim community was split into as many groups as the Israelites, a guiding light appeared in the form of the Promised Messiah(as). This night of destiny led to the establishment of a new system of Khilafat beginning with the Messiah and Mahdi and as Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was promised, this khilafat would continue unto the end of days.

Beyond Islam, the promise of Khilafat can be said to have always been with man. The first Khalifah was Adam(as), who was the first man tasked with guiding his fellows to the one God. Ever since this first khilafat, Allah, having promised continued guidance to all mankind, has maintained this promise of khilafat throughout man's history.

The Holy Qur'an states :

**"...there
is no people
to whom
a Warner
has
not been sent
(35:25)."**

This indicates that khilafat is an institution as old as man and is a result of the promise of Allah to always provide guidance for the world. Given what we know about the requisites of Khilafat, namely that there must be obedient followers sincere in their worship of God, we know that communities of faithful have always existed in some fashion. This is necessary as sincere devotees to Allah are promised a Khalifah and if all people have been sent a Warner, then there always has been some form of a rightly guided community at all times within all peoples.

The promise of khilafat then, as expansive as it must be, should trigger in every person the understanding that Allah can always be found, since His community always exists somewhere in the world. In the case of the present day, that community is the community of the Promised Messiah(as). Although other communities do good deeds and try to follow moral codes, there is only one present day community that is promised divine guidance and protection. The Ahmadiyya Community is global and is committed to sharing the blessing of khilafat with the rest of the world.



THE END OF political khilafat IN ISLAM

Hassan Khan

History of Khilafat

After the demise of the Holy Founder of Islam, Prophet Muhammad(sa), Muslims promptly elected for themselves a Khalifah (Caliph), a successor to the prophet. The concept of Khilafat (Caliphate) was not new to them. The Qur'an and Ahadith had already spoken about it as a blessing for Muslims who would remain true to the teachings of Islam.

The blessing was that the Muslims would remain united around a pious leader who would lead them to piety. For a period of about 30 years, Muslims continued to elect leaders in the same spirit and gave their full allegiance to them. This initial line of successors is known as the Rightly Guided Khilafat. During this time, Islam spread to the rest of Arabia, Persia and North Africa and all became part of the Islamic empire. However, such quick expansion brought intrigues and rebellions among the earlier Muslims who then failed to protect the institution of Khilafat. Three khalifahs (caliphs) were murdered in succession and the system collapsed. What replaced it is now known as the political Khilafat in Islam.

Unlike the spiritual khilafat, the political khilafat was despotic and its sole aim was to maintain political unity among different lands and people of the new Islamic empire. The despots that followed the Rightly Guided Khilafat were called Khalifahs because that was the title they chose for themselves. Otherwise, they had little or no influence over their subjects in religious matters.

The important task of moral and spiritual development of Muslims was left to religious scholars sometimes known as Mujaddids and Sufis. Of course this was far from an ideal arrangement. Over the centuries, Muslims became divided politically and across religious lines.

The political khilafat was mostly dynastic. The two of the most famous Arab dynasties were the Umayyads and the Abbasids. However, as the Islamic empire spread even further into Asia and Europe and then fragmented, the different parts were then ruled by Khalifahs of their own. For example, there were Fatimid Khalifahs in Africa and the Cordoba Khilafat in Spain. Often they were at war with each other. There were also Muslims who were opposed to the institution of Khilafat altogether. Followers of one of the oldest sects of Islam, known as the Shia, never embraced Khilafat, even that of the Rightly Guided one.



Umayyad Caliphate in 750

Throughout Islamic history they have remained a persecuted group under many rulers. At the same time, they caused rebellions and opposed Khalifahs whenever possible, for example in Persia and modern day Iran since the Shia Safavid dynasty came to power in 1501. In short, different political khilafat dynasties came to power and then ended in different times like any other monarchical dynasties in history. The most recent and the last political khilafat was that of the Ottoman Empire which was abolished in 1924. Right around the same time, however, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community founded by the Promised Messiah Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) of Qadian, India, elected its first Spiritual Khalifah in 1908. The aims of this khilafat were the same as that of the spiritual khilafat of early Islam. The history of Islamic Khilafat completed a full circle.



Shah Ismail I, the founder of Safavid Dynasty of Iran.



Abdülmecid II was the last Caliph of Islam from the Ottoman dynasty.

The Ottoman Khilafat

By the thirteenth century AD, large parts of Northern Africa, Eastern Europe and most of Asia were being ruled by the Muslims. The Islamic empire was the largest the world had ever seen. Over time, provinces in different parts of the empire had become increasingly autonomous. It was at this time that the Ottomans from Central Asia began to unify the empire under their own rule and expand it even further. The Ottoman rulers were called Sultans. In the Sixteenth century, however, after defeating the Mameluke Khilafat and annexing the holy cities of Islam in Arabia, the Ottoman rulers officially took on the title of Khalifah for the first time. This was at around the height of expansion of the Ottoman power. Soon after, a steady decline set in due to incompetent rule, corruption and revolts in many provinces against the central government. The centuries that followed also saw the rise of European powers who began to excel other nations in about everything: military, science, arts and exploration. Europeans also began colonizing the world including occupying and interfering in the increasingly autonomous regions of the Ottoman Empire. With the political and economic rise of Europe in the face of Ottoman decline, questions began to be asked about the direction of the Ottoman Empire and reforms based on European ideals were made. The over-reaching idea in Europe at that time was that religion hindered progress. Under the reforms, therefore, the old system of a Shariah-based government was ended and the fair and equitable Islamic social structure of the Empire was destroyed. While there were many other reforms that were necessary and did not change the role of Islam in the Empire, many of the new laws were aimed at removing Islam from

public life. The Ottoman Empire had historically used Islam to unite the diverse peoples of its lands, but the removal of Islam slowly broke away the Empire. The rising tide of European secularism and resulting fragmentation made the Ottoman Khilafat an extremely weak institution and finally lead to its abolition. In the First World War, the Ottomans decided to support Germany and Austria-Hungary. This ended in defeat by the Allied forces of UK, France and Russia in 1918. According to the terms of surrender the Ottoman Empire was partitioned creating the modern day Arab states. At the time, the new states including the modern day Turkey which was also the seat of the Ottoman Khilafat were put under the occupation of the victor nations. The Turks soon organized a war of independence but the Ottoman Khalifah quickly declared it Unislamic. This was possibly done under pressure from the Allied countries. Nevertheless, the resistance, led by Mustafa Kemal Pasha was successful and an independent Republic of Turkey came into being. The new government exiled the Khalifah but then appointed another as a ceremonial figure head in November 1922. His name was Abdulmecid II and he was officially the last Ottoman Khalifah. The Turkish government completely abolished Khilafat in 1924 and sent him in exile.

Attempts of Revival

Even though the Ottoman Khilafat was not religious, it was still held in reverence by Sunni Muslims especially in the Indian Sub-Continent. After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in WWI, the Indian Muslims feared that the British would terminate Khilafat and so launched a movement to persuade them otherwise. This was known as the Khilafat movement and was founded by Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar. At the time, India was a British colony fighting for autonomy. The Hindus, led by Gandhi, also joined the protests in hopes of weakening the British Raj. Ultimately, the Turks themselves abolished Khilafat and the whole affair fizzled out and proved to be an embarrassment for the Muslims. Afterwards, some prominent Muslims around the world arranged a summit in Cairo in 1926 to decide the future of Khilafat, but no consensus was achieved. Some political and religious figures since then have attempted to assume the title of Khalifah. However, their influence remained small both in space and time. The most recent Khilafat that was declared is that of the so called Islamic State (IS) in Iraq which has been rejected by Muslim countries worldwide. There has also been a relatively well known international organization called Hizbutahrir whose stated goal is to unify Muslims countries under an Islamic Khilafat. This movement has been active since 1953 but has been banned in many Muslim countries and have not yet produced a single Khalifah.

In the aftermath of the Ottoman Khilafat it is clear that Muslims regard Khilafat as an important part of their faith. They yearn to re-establish it yet despite all their efforts, they have failed to build Khilafat as an institution. In fact, any attempt to create a khilafat is now mostly viewed as political instigation and is quickly rejected by Muslims worldwide.

The Ahmadiyya Khilafat

On the eve of the abolition of Khilafat in Turkey, the Ahmadiyya Community was being led by the spiritual khilafat of Khalifatul Masih II Hadrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad(ra) . In his weekly Friday sermon he pointed out that during the First World War, the general Muslim population of India sided and fought with the British against the Ottomans. This was in spite of the fact that they considered the Ottoman ruler as their Khalifah. Later when the Ottomans were defeated, the same people asked the British to protect the Khilafat. This was hypocritical and it was clear to everyone that Ottoman khilafat meant little to the Muslims worldwide.

His Holiness said that the fate of the Ottoman Empire was indeed deplorable. The terms of defeat were extremely harsh compared to the other losing countries. There appeared to be religious discrimination against Islam at work. It was also sad that the last Khalifah and his family were exiled from their land. The reason behind this is that Khilafat for ordinary Muslims had become a complicated matter. The government of Turkey therefore found it better to abolish Khilafat than have it interfere with democracy.

As far as Ahmadis are concerned, his Holiness said that we only consider successors of Promised Messiah(as) as Khalifahs. The Promised Messiah(as) was the Imam appointed by Allah in this age and Ahmadis can consider no one else as a Khalifah. Moreover, the Promised Messiah(as) had prophesized the end of the Ottoman dynasty and this came true within around 15 years. This is among so many other signs of the truth of Promised Messiah(as) who was appointed for the reformation of Muslims. It is time that Muslims around the world accept his call for their own benefit. Since this historic Friday sermon, almost a century has passed. The institution of Khilafat in the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community remains strong and is ever determined to serve the cause of Islam. It remains a spiritual Khilafat and is focused on serving the religious, moral and other humanitarian needs of people worldwide.

The story of Khilafat in Islam is both tragic and full of hope. The present Khalifah, Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad(aba) , reminds everyone that fifteen hundred years ago the founder of Islam, Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) had foretold of the events. The decline of Islam therefore serves as a proof of the truthfulness of Islam and so does its triumphant future. The tradition is as follows:

"Prophethood shall remain among you as long as Allah shall will. He will bring about its end and follow it with Khilafat on the precepts of prophethood for as long as He shall will and then bring about its end. A tyrannical monarchy will then follow and will remain as long as Allah shall will and then come to an end. There will follow thereafter monarchical despotism to last as long as Allah shall will and come to an end upon His decree. There will then emerge Khilafat on precept of Prophethood." The Holy Prophet(sa) said no more (Musnad Ahmad).



SPIRITUAL TREASURES

BOOKS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH(as)

Masih Hindustan Mein Jesus in India

Reviewed by Shazia Sohail

Year Written: 1899

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Introduction

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad outlines the reasons for writing this book and provides the rationale for the need for a Messiah in contemporary times. The prevailing view among Muslims regarding the role of Jesus Christ(as) was that after his descent from heaven he would fill the earth with bloodshed at an unprecedented scale in order to spread Islam. This erroneous view had infested Muslims with a callous and cruel attitude toward human life. They had forgotten that Islam allowed only defensive wars. These views were born out of greed and were preventing people from accepting the author, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) as the real Promised Messiah who had been commanded to invite them to God with humility and gentleness. But now that clear and conclusive evidence had been found that Jesus(as) died a natural death and will not be descending from heaven to fill the earth with blood, he hopes that "the sweet and beautiful springs of lowliness, humility and mercy" will flow out of the hearts of Muslims who were deeply conflicted in their morals.

The author also hopes that this book will also reinforce the concept of Unity by ending the false belief held by Christians about the divinity of Jesus Christ(as). He intends to present evidence to prove that Jesus Christ(as) was delivered alive from the cross, then he traveled in search of the Lost Sheep of Israel to other lands and died at the age of 120 at Srinagar in Kashmir, India,

after fulfilling his mission of preaching to the Lost Sheep of Israel. Toward this end are presented testimonies of the Bible, the Holy Qur'an and Ahadith, or sayings of the Holy Prophet(sa), medical books, historical records, oral traditions, and circumstantial evidence.

Evidence from the Bible

Some of the biblical verses that prove Jesus Christ's(as) deliverance from the cross have been quoted and explained. For example Jesus(as) prophesied that his case would be like Jonah's (as) who came out of the belly of the fish alive after three days. The Bible states that only an accursed one dies on the cross. Jesus(as) was a prophet of God so he could not have died on the cross. He himself predicts that he will travel to Galilee after a miraculous escape from death on the cross. He had received information of his impending arrest and had prayed to God all night, on his face and in tears. According to the author, "such prayer offered with such humility, and for which Jesus had ample time, could not go unaccepted... That is why when he was arrested and put on the Cross, and when he found the circumstances not according to his expectations, he involuntarily cried 'My God, my God why hast Thou forsaken me.'"

Pilate, the judge assigned to Jesus'(as) case, had wanted to release him but was afraid the Jews would carry tales to Caesar of his disloyalty. His wife had a troubling dream the night before that if Jesus(as) died on the cross it would not be a happy thing for her. The crucifixion was scheduled for the latter part of the day on Friday, with Sabbath starting at sunset. According to Jewish custom, it was a crime to let anyone remain on the cross on Sabbath day or the night previous to it. At the sixth hour (6pm) there was a severe dust storm and the sky darkened. The Jews hastily took Jesus(as) and two thieves off their crosses for fear of violating the sanctity of the Sabbath. The legs of the two thieves were broken but Jesus(as), who was presumed dead, was only speared on his side whereupon blood and water gushed out. Joseph of Arimathea immediately came to Pilate to claim his body, whereupon Pilate showed his surprise that Jesus(as) had died so soon.

Jesus(as) was placed in a spacious cavern with a stone covering the entrance. Mary Magdalene is surprised to find him alive on Sunday morning. She at once informed the disciples but they did not believe it. Then, as they went out to the countryside, he was seen by two disciples who were on their way to Emmaus which was 3.75 miles from Jerusalem. He joined them on their journey, dined with them and spent the night at Emmaus.

On the road to Galilee, Jesus(as) met his eleven disciples and proved to them that he was not a spirit by proclaiming as much, by asking them to handle his wounds, and by eating boiled fish and honeycomb in their presence. He left for Galilee because, like a mortal being, he feared his enemies.

The author states: "In short, if Jesus had really come to life after his death and had assumed a glorious body, it was up to him to furnish proof of such life to the Jews. But we know that he did not do this. It is absurd, therefore, to accuse the Jews of trying to render negatory the proof of Jesus' coming to life again. No, Jesus himself has not given the slightest proof of his restoration to life; rather, by his secret flight, by the fact of his taking food, and sleep, and exhibiting his wounds, he himself proved that he did not die on the Cross."

Evidence from Qur'an and Ahadith

The Qur'an states that Jesus(as) did not die on the cross; rather, God created circumstances that saved him. No one has any conclusive proof of his death (4:158). Jesus(as) will find great honor and eminence (3:46) which he did in the lands he migrated and traveled to. And also that Allah will clear Jesus of all charges (93:56) brought against him by the Jews that he had been cursed by God.

Prophet Muhammad(sa) said that Jesus(as) was 125 years of age, and that God directed 'O Jesus! Move from one place to another.' He added that Jesus(as) always used to travel; he went from one country to another, and at nightfall wherever he was, he used to eat the vegetation of the jungle and drink pure water. When Prophet Muhammad(sa) declared that the most favored in the sight of God are the poor, he was asked, "What was meant by the poor? Were they the people who, like Jesus the Messiah, fled from their country with their faith?"

Evidence from Books of Medicine

A medical preparation called the 'Ointment of Jesus' is found in hundreds of books along with the statement that it had been prepared for the wounds of Jesus(as) by his disciples. A little after the event of the Cross, this preparation was included in a Latin medical book, which was then translated into several languages over the centuries by eminent physicians of all religions alike.

It is quite remarkable that Cristian physicians recorded it since they believe that Jesus(as) died on the cross and was in no need of an ointment. Equally remarkable is that Muslim physicians, the most notable being Bu Ali Sina (Avicenna), recorded it since they believe Jesus(as) was never put on the cross. The ingredients of this ointment are used for healing wounds; this explains how Jesus(as) recovered sufficiently, within three days, to be able to walk seventy miles from Jerusalem to Galilee.

Evidence from Books of History

Evidence from Islamic books:

The following account is found in Rauzatus Safa, a Persian book of history:

"Jesus (on whom be peace) was named the Messiah because he was a great traveller. He wore a woolen scarf on his head, and a woolen cloak on his body. He had a stick in his hand; he used to wander from country to country and from city to city. At nightfall he would stay where he was. He ate jungle vegetables, drank jungle water, and went on his travels on foot. His companions, in one of his travels, once bought a horse for him; he rode the horse one day, but as he could not make any provision for the feeding of the horse, he returned it. Journeying from his country, he arrived at Nasibain, which was at a distance of several hundred miles from his home. With him were a few of his disciples who he sent into the city to preach. In the city, however, there were current wrong and unfounded rumors about Jesus (on whom be peace) and his mother. The governor of the city, therefore, arrested the disciples and then summoned Jesus. Jesus miraculously healed some persons and exhibited other miracles. The king of the territory of Nasibain, therefore, with all his armies and his people, became a follower of his. The legend of the 'coming down of food' contained in the Holy Quran belongs to the days of his travels."

Based on his research, the author has plotted the path of Jesus'as travel on the map below:



In the book Siraj-ul-Maluk, in 1306 A.H., Jesus(as) is referred to as "The Chief of Travellers." Lisan-ul Arab and Tajul-Urus Sharah Qamus state: "Jesus was named the 'Messiah', because he wandered about, and because he did not stay at one place."

Evidence from books on Buddhism:

The author establishes with a remarkably impressive array of references from books of western scholars of Buddhism that there is an uncanny resemblance between the life and teachings of Jesus Christ(as) and those of Buddha(as) as seen in the records of Tibetan Buddhists. He explains that, Jesus(as) who had come to Tibet in search of the Lost Sheep of Israel, found that some of them had accepted Buddhism. He therefore turned his attention to Buddhists who were expecting the appearance of a 'Messiah' Buddha, with fair skin, as per a prophecy by Gautama Buddha(as). There was no written record of Buddha's teachings till that time. These people accepted Jesus as the second coming of Buddha, and recorded his sayings and life events in their books and ascribed them to Buddha.

Both Buddha(as) and Jesus(as) held the titles of Light, Master, Blessed, Prince, One Who Fulfills the Object of His Coming, Refuge of the Tired, and King. Both were tempted by the devil, in a vision, with the riches of the world at roughly the same age and both rejected the devil. Both served a forty days' fast. Their teachings are identical as well. Both taught not to resist evil, love your enemy, live in poverty, shun pride and falsehood and greed. Both preached in parables. Buddha delivered an impressive sermon on a hill in Benares just as Jesus(as) delivered his sermon on the mount. Just as the Gospel encourages celibacy, so does the teaching of the Buddha; just as there was an earthquake when Jesus was put on the Cross, so it is recorded there was an earthquake at the death of the Buddha. In regard to both, it is stated they were born without a father, a star rose at the times of the birth of both, the story of Genesis in Buddhist books is similar to that in the Torah, men are considered superior to women in both, and so on.

The name of the Buddha prophesied by Gautama Buddha(as) was Metteyya which is similar to Messiah. Buddha had prophesied that the principles and teachings of his faith will decline in about 500 years when the Bagwa (white) Metteyya, will come and revive it. Jesus(as) who was fairer-skinned than Gautama Buddha and his followers, appeared 500 years after the Buddha and was recognized as the Metteyya when he traveled to Tibet. Thereafter he resuscitated the teachings of the Buddha.

Evidence from books of history:

The question of why Jesus Christ(as) made the long journey to Tibet, Afghanistan and Kashmir is answered in this section. The ten tribes of Israel, who in the Gospels have been called the Lost Sheep of Israel, had migrated to these countries and Jesus(as) had come to convey his divine message to them. If he had not done so, his mission would have remained unfulfilled. An abundance of evidence has been compiled to support the claim that inhabitants of Afghanistan, its surrounding areas, and Kashmir trace their origin to King Saul of Israel. Only a small sample is presented here.



In appearance the Afghans resemble the Jews in all respects. Like them, the younger brother marries the widow of the elder brother. It is difficult to account for the universal prevalence of Israelite names, or religious observances like the Feast of the Passover, amongst Afghans without admitting some early connection with the Israelite nation.

On the basis of oral tradition the author informs us that the people of the hilly tracts of Alai and Kala Dakah have called themselves Bani Israel from time immemorial. Then there is a tribe in the Hazara district itself which attributes their origin to Israel. Similarly, the people of the hilly region between Chalas and Kabul call themselves Israelites. About the people of Kashmir, the view expressed by Francois Bernier (1891) is that their dress, their features and some of their customs conclusively point to the fact that they are of Israelite origin. George Forster (1808) states in his book that during his stay in Kashmir he thought himself to be amidst a tribe of the Jews. H. W. Bellew (1880) writes "it is mentioned that the Afghans came from Syria. Nebuchadnezzar took them prisoner and settled them in Persia and Media, from whence at some later time they marched to the East and settled in the Ghaur hills, where they were known as Beni Israel." Dr. George Moore (1861) states that the Tartar tribes named Chosan are of Jewish origin and among them are to be found traces of the ancient Jewish faith; for example, they practice circumcision. The Afghans say that they are the ten lost tribes of Israel. After the sacking of Jerusalem, the king, Nebuchadnezzar, took them prisoner and settled them in the Ghaur country, near Bamiyar.

James Bryce (1856), states that the Afghans trace their genealogy to Saul, the Israelite King, and call themselves the descendants of Israel. Alexander Burns says that the Afghans state that they are of Jewish origin; that the king Babul captured them and settled them in the territory of Ghaour which is to the northwest of Kabul. Col. G. B. Malleson (1878) states that Abdullah Khan of Herat, the French traveler Friar John, and Sir William Jones (who was a great orientalist) agree that the Afghan people are descended from the Beni-Israel; they are the descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes. J. P. Ferrier (1858) states that the majority of oriental historians are of the opinion that the Afghan people are descendants of the Ten Tribes of Israel and that the Afghans' own opinion is the same. The same historian says that Afghans possess evidence that at Peshawar, during his invasion of India, Nadir Shah was presented by the chiefs of the Yusaf-Zai (tribe of Joseph) with a Bible written in Hebrew as well as several other articles preserved by their families for the performance of religious ceremonies of their old faith. There were also Jews in Nadir Shah's camp. On seeing the articles they readily recognized them.

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad concludes that the abundance of evidence presented in this book will convince a just person that Afghans and Kashmiris, who are to be found in India, on the frontier, and in its neighborhood, are really Israelites. "It is not surprising, therefore, that Jesus should have come to India and Kashmir. On the other hand, it would indeed be surprising if, without discharging his duties, he should have ascended into heaven."



Sirr-ul-Khilafah (The Reality of Khilafat)

Reviewed by Lubna R. Malik

For centuries, factions of Muslims have battled on sectarian lines stemming from the khilafat that followed the demise of the Holy Prophet (sa). Striving to bridge the Sunni-Shia divide is the foundation of the book *Sirr-ul-Khilafah*, or the Reality of Khilafat, written by Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) in 1894, originally in Arabic and later translated into Urdu and English.

Regarding the process of writing this book, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) writes:

**God Himself helped me to write...
I cannot call them divine revelations,
but I can say
with a great deal of emphasis
that it was a
special divine assistance that made my
hand write.**

With this "special divine assistance", Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) challenges the Shia notion that Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (ra), Hadrat Umar Farooq (ra) and Hadrat Uthman Ghani (ra) were usurpers of the khilafat and wrongdoers, and instead illustrates how these three men were the truest Muslims to have served the Holy Prophet (sa).

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) writes that Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (ra), Hadrat Umar Farooq (ra) and Hadrat Usman Ghani (ra) were examples of spiritual greatness who left their homes to seek God's pleasure, took part in every battle and abandoned all for the sake of God. Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) warns the reader to judge these three rightly-guided men in light of their true examples and not the venomous lies that are spread about them by some mischief-mongers. These three khalifahs were tortured in a similar manner as the prophets and were the true heirs of the Apostles of God. Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) writes:

**...when a true believer is cursed
and is recklessly denounced as
kafir [or disbeliever] for no fault of his own
and is subjected to abuse,
he takes on the likeness
of the prophets and
joins the ranks of the Elects of God.**

In this manner, these three khalifahs were rewarded for every trial they faced. For these pious and righteous "right-hands" of the Holy Prophet (sa) who turned their backs on their pre-Islamic fraternal ties, gave up their parents and progeny, abandoned everything, gave their full precedence to the Will of God and deeply revered the Holy Book, Allah the Almighty responded with praise for them in His Supreme Book, the Holy Qur'an.

Addressing those who breed suspicion among the Muslim community and create divisions instead of unity, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), in line with Allah the Almighty's words in the Holy Qur'an and the words of the Holy Prophet (sa), advises:

**...see
that no section
should ridicule
another section. It is quite
likely that the one ridiculed may be
better than the one which has indulged
in ridicule.**

On the same analogy, no woman should ridicule another woman, who, in reality, may be more honorable. Do not scandalize each other, nor should anyone indulge in name-calling, because it is a rank transgression after accepting Islam. ...abstain from suspecting others....

Do not spy on others nor indulge in back-biting. Is there anyone among you who would eat the flesh of his dead brother?

A "rank transgression". This is the dismal level to which Muslims can fall if they are not careful, with the ultimate result of attaining only the displeasure of Allah the Almighty.

Regarding the truth of the first three khalifahs of the Holy Prophet (sa), Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) explains the verse of the Holy Qur'an known as ayat istikhlaf, which reads:

Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them successors from among those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security and peace after their fear.

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (ra) explains that this verse was a promise of the khilafat of Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (ra). He details how upon the demise of the Holy Prophet (sa), Islam and the Muslim ummah faced many trials and tribulations—many hypocrites had turned to apostasy, many false prophets had arisen and society was stricken with fear and harassment. It was in this environment of "fear" that Allah the Almighty raised Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (ra), a righteous and pious man who believed and did good works, as the "the Second Adam of Islam", as the "First Manifestation of the radiance that emanated from the most Exalted of Human Beings"—as the first successor to the Holy Prophet (sa). Through the khilafat of Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (ra), the Muslim ummah saw Islam regain its foothold and peace and security spread. With the immense responsibility of the Muslim ummah before him, Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (ra) did not pay any attention to his own children, he did not let them grow rich, he did not assign them to high offices; instead, he "spurned the 'self' and its allurements" and attained a degree of self-annihilation in which bodily desires and superficial emotions were "alien to his God-intoxicated self."



After elucidating the true nature of the khilafat of Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (ra), Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) invites to a prayer duel those who alleged false accusations against the first three khalifahs of Islam. The terms of the prayer duel were that both he and the challengers would pray for Allah's curse to be on the party that was lying about the khalifas of Islam and, if within one year, the prayer was unsuccessful against Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), then he would accept any punishment, would affirm the other party as truthful and would pay 5,000 rupees to the other party.

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) also appeals to the logic of his readers. He explains that if the allegations that Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (ra), Hadrat Umar Farooq (ra) and Hazrat Uthman Ghani (ra) were hypocrites and usurpers are to be believed, then the entire Muslim ummah that pledged allegiance to their khilafat is also tarnished as hypocrites for following such leaders. Even more importantly, it was under the leadership of these three khalifahs that the Holy Qur'an was assembled and published in the form we have benefitted from since their time. If these khalifahs were false and hypocrites, then the entire integrity of the Holy Qur'an would be in question—a situation that Allah the Almighty has Himself promised He would never allow to happen because He would always safeguard the Holy Qur'an. Thus, it is illogical to even begin to contemplate that these first three khalifahs were false in any manner.

Most importantly, Hadrat Ali (ra), a pious and rightly guided khalifa of the Holy Prophet (sa) to the Sunnis and the champion to the Shias, pledged allegiance to the first three khalifahs. If the first three khalifahs were in fact hypocrites and usurpers, why would Hadrat Ali (ra) have agreed to owe allegiance to them? Hadrat Ali (ra), writes Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) was:

**...the soul
of sincerity and fidelity.
He did not show any
resentment...
[he] was the symbol of love and a
treasure-house of magnanimity.
He was hujjatullah
[or the divine
argument for the people].
He was the best
exemplar of his time.**

This Elect of God who was the Lion of Allah believed in the truth of Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (ra), Hadrat Umar Farooq (ra) and Hadrat Usman Ghani (ra). To allege anything against the first three khalifahs is tantamount to accusing Hadrat Ali (ra) of the terrible shirk act of lying.

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) closes his argument of historical fact, Divine proof and basic logic by reminding the reader that he holds all four khalifahs of the Holy Prophet (sa) in great esteem and no one should ever contend that there is any less respect and admiration for Hadrat Ali (ra). He writes:

**God—the Lord of East and West—knows that I
cherish deep love for Hazrat Ali—the 'Lion of
God'—and for his great sons. I am against a person
who is against them.**



RESURRECTING KHILAFAH

By Naser-ud-Din Shams

The Spiritual Progeny of the Holy Prophet(sa) are the True Heirs

One of the proofs of Tauhid [Unity of God] is that we see repeatable patterns throughout the universe. These creative thumbprints not only indicate they were left by the Same Source, but give us reason to reflect and ponder over the wisdom and spiritual truths that lie deeply buried within.

Khilāfah is predicated upon one such paradigm. This institution reflects the Grand Scheme and Order which provides the foundation upon which this universe operates – from the greatest macro structures to the most microscopic particles – both physically and spiritually. Khilāfah is a natural form of governance, and its rightful heirs are the spiritual children of the Holy Prophet.

Over time, this Khilāfah would deteriorate into monarchies and sultanates driven by material gain. As everything in the material world, these would die out. However, true khilāfah established upon spiritual precepts would be resurrected by the greatest son of the Holy Prophet, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah, the Khātām-ul-Awlād [i.e., the Seal of the Begotten], and his progeny, both physical and spiritual, would prevail throughout the world just as Adam's progeny did.

Repeatable Patterns – the Imprint of God

The creation of Allah holds deeply buried within it troves of treasures. Reflecting upon them we see spiritual guidance for our success as a community. The Holy Qur'ān states that Allah "...originates creation, then repeats it, and it is most easy for Him" [30:28]. This verse not only points to the creative repetition of a life after this life, but to the various repeated paradigms and patterns we see within this life – an imprint that points to a Single Source.

The paradigm of one God around Whom all souls and creation magnetically revolve is the most fundamental Grand Scheme, and frames the template we find throughout the universe. On the most macro level, we observe that moons revolve around planets, planets around stars, stars around the center of the galaxy and galaxies around a more central point – billions of celestial bodies held in orderly motion through the magnetic pull of gravity. On the most micro level, we see atoms with electrons that revolve around their neutrons, and human cells with their nucleus. Spiritually, various religions manifest this concept in rituals such as

the Hajj, in which millions revolve seven times around the first House of Allah which becomes a central spiritual focal point, and Hindu rituals of marriage which include seven revolutions around a circle by the bride and groom. Materially, it also applies to every human designed organization where a president or CEO is the directing center of all activity. Khilāfah is predicated upon this fundamental structure, which keeps the community orderly and united.

Violation of this principle results in disunity, discord and ruin. The Holy Qur'an states: "If there had been in the heavens and the earth other gods besides Allah, then surely both would have gone to ruin" [17:42]. Similarly, the Holy Qur'an tells us that mankind was one community until they differed amongst themselves. These differences increased until the community was torn apart in conflict. The Qur'an states, "And they did not become divided but after knowledge had come to them, through jealousy among themselves..." [42:15].

Even in this physical world we see chemicals and substances that naturally do not mix with one another. However, with the introduction of an emulsifier, the bonding process begins. Islam is the spiritual emulsifier for humanity, and khilāfah unites men and women into a harmonious spiritual bond – the disruption of which is the goal of Satan's worldly whisperings. Unfortunately, the Khulafā-ur-Rāshidūn came to an end because Muslims gave in to these whisperings, and the institution deteriorated into dynasties, monarchies and sultanates as greed and other false idols were pursued as gods besides Allah.

Emirates, Monarchies and Sultanates

When Hadrat 'Umar ibn al-Khattab(ra), received the Muslim army returning victoriously from the Persian campaigns, he broke into tears. The soldiers who left penniless were now returning with the finest garments, expensive armor, gold and silver. 'Umar saw such immeasurable wealth as the beginning of the end. It would eventually take Muslims away from the remembrance of Allah.

As Muslims gradually fell prey to the lure of materiality, so did their rulers. This deterioration would continue until the Holy Prophet's prophecy of the Latter Days, in which he said that the worst of men would be their rulers. The very institution of Khilāfah had degenerated into monarchies, emirates, and sultanates.

With the elimination of Khilāfah – the source of the Muslim ummah's unity – Muslims fought against one another to ascend to political, worldly power. Some dynasties tried desperately to adopt or hold onto the title of "khalifah" in order to convey the sense of Islamic legitimacy, but it was to no avail. In fact, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (or the Levant), known as ISIS or ISIL, seeks this very legitimacy today, but their actions expose them as usurpers of a throne that they're simply not worthy of.

After the reign of the Righteously Guided Caliphs (632 to 661 CE), the Umayyad Caliphate ruled from 661 to 750CE, when a major revolt culminated in their defeat at the Battle of Zab by the Abbasids. The Abbasid Caliphate lasted centuries thereafter. The Abbasids won the perception of legitimacy primarily through their lineal descent from the Holy Prophet's uncle, 'Abbas(ra) ibn 'Abd-ul-Muttalib. They would, in turn, be challenged by yet others who claimed genealogical, religious and political legitimacy. All of these dynasties, kingdoms and regimes died out – the last of which was the Ottoman Caliphate in 1924. Since then, Muslims have struggled to revive their past glory with unsuccessful attempts at restoring khilāfah. However, the legitimate heir to this throne must be a true son of the Holy Prophet(sa).

The Holy Prophet's Sons

The Holy Qur'an indicates that true sonship entails love, devotion and allegiance. When Noah(as) cried to Allah to save his son from the flood, he prayed,

"My Lord, verily my son is of my family, and surely, Thy promise is true, and Thou art the Most Just of judges" [11:46].

Allah replied,

"O Noah, he is surely not of thy family; he is indeed a man of unrighteous conduct. So ask not of Me that of which thou hast no knowledge. I advise thee lest thou become one of the ignorant" [11:47].

Here Allah says that Noah's son was not of his real family, for the son had not established a relationship with God through his father Noah(as). Those who did were saved in the ark, and eventually multiplied and prospered throughout the world – a sign which would reappear for the coming Promised Messiah(as).

Khilāfah could only be restored by a true son, or devout follower, of the Holy Prophet(sa). Hadrat Jalal-ud-Din as-Suyuti(rta) has noted in his "Al-Jam'i-us-Saghir,"

that the Holy Prophet(sa) said, "Abu Bakr is the best of people except the coming of a prophet after me." Thus, the best follower and son within the Ummah would be a prophet, and would naturally be Khātām-ul-Awlād, or the Seal of the Children.

A Note on the Term Khātām

The seal or khātām is a traditional symbol of royal authority much like the terms *crown*, *scepter*, and *throne*. It literally acted as the king's signature on documents and represented his authority. Before Islam the term was metaphorically applied to Zerubbabel in the Old Testament and Jesus(as) in the New Testament:

"...says the Lord of hosts, I will take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, says the Lord, and will make thee as a signet [Hebrew: *khuthām*]: for I have chosen thee..."[Haggai 2:23].

"Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man [i.e., Jesus] will give to you, for on him the Father, God, has set His seal [Grk: *sphragizo*]" [John 6:27].

Both uses above have the same meaning of being the chosen and legitimate authority.

Khātām is also metaphorically used to praise a person who has achieved the highest point of development of a skill, or completely fulfills the ultimate purpose of their creation, much like the full moon of the 14th night culminates into its full effulgence. At this stage of perfection, they become the authority through which others must pass in order to attain perfection. This is why Jesus(as), as the Khātām-ul-Khulafā' of the Israelites, became the "door" at the end of the cycle of Jewish prophets. He said, "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep [i.e., Israelites] did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life..." [John 10:8 – 10].

This concept of the Khātām being the "door" is reiterated in "Khutbah Ilhamiyyah" where the following words were revealed to the Promised Messiah(as): "I have been appointed at the highest station of culmination in Wilayat just as our lord, the Holy Prophet(sa) was at the highest point of culmination in Nubuwwat. He was the Seal of the Prophets and I am the Seal of the Auliya'. There is no wali after me except the one who is from me and is under my covenant." In other words, every wali must pass through the door of the Promised Messiah(as) to be recognized as legitimate – a metaphorical way of saying the Promised Messiah(as) is the "last" wali.

Similarly, the Promised Messiah(as) was the Khātām-ul-Khulafā’ for the Muslim ummah. He would re-establish Khilāfah on the physical and spiritual paradigm that would unite the Muslims, and breathe into them a message that would give them “life.” He would be given legitimacy by God Himself as the rightful heir to the Holy Prophet’s Khilāfah, and for this he would be called Khātām-ul-Awlād, or the Seal of the Children.

The Prophecy of Khātām-ul-Awlād

Scholars in the Muslim ummah were blessed with revelation just as the Israelite prophets were. One highly renowned Muslim savant from Spain, Hadrat Muhy-ud-Din ibn ‘Arabi(rta) [1165 to 1240CE] received a revelation about a man who would appear in the Latter Days who would be called Khātām-ul-Awlād. The actual prophecy of Ibn ‘Arabi(rta) is in his book “Fusūs-ul-Hikam” [“The Seal Gems of Wisdom”] in the last paragraph of the second chapter:

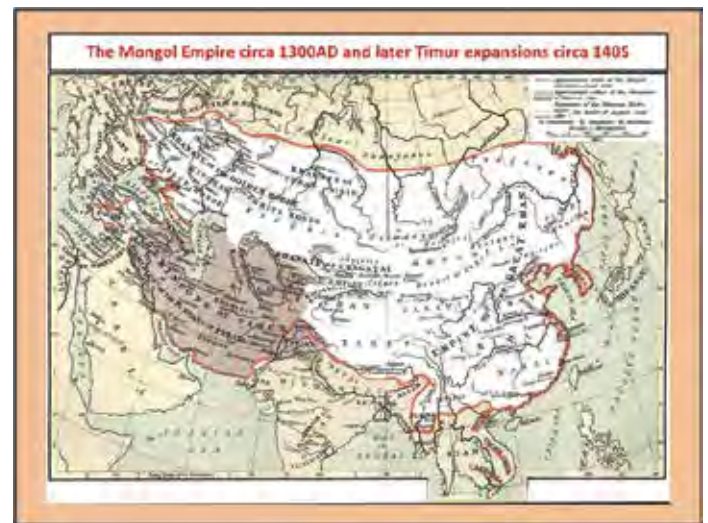
“In the footsteps of Seth [the son of Adam], the last man will be born, and he will carry his secrets. No man will be born after him, so he will be the Khātām-ul-Awlād [Seal of the Begotten]. A sister will be born with him, and she will emerge before him, and he will follow her with his head at her feet. He will be born in China (the country furthest east), and he will speak the language of his country. Sterility will spread in men and women, so there will be much promiscuity without conception. He will call the people to Allah, but will be ignored. When Allah takes him and the believers of his time, those who remain will be like beasts, not knowing what is lawful from what is unlawful. They will act according to their natural instincts with lust, devoid of reason and law. Upon them the Last Hour will occur.”

Under Divine revelation, Ibn ‘Arabi(rta) correctly foretold the following about the Promised Messiah(as) over 600 years earlier:

Birth: The Promised Messiah(as) had a twin sister named Jannat who was born first, such that her feet were literally at his head. Jannat died 7 months after birth. As the Promised Messiah(as) was a burūz, or spiritual manifestation, of Adam(as), this twin birth was an element of their resemblance. As Adam(as), the “first [perfect] man,” came first followed by his female counterpart at the beginning of time, so did the Promised Messiah(as), the “last [perfect] man”, appear after his female counterpart at the end of time.

Location: The Promised Messiah(as) was born in northern India and his ancestors emerged from Persia. At the time of Ibn ‘Arabi, circa 1240CE, the Mongol Empire stretched from its origin in China to the borders of Palestine and Europe, and included all of Persia and northern India.

This harmonizes with several other prophecies: 1) A hadith in “Sunan Abu Daud” states that the Mahdi would come from Maa Wara an-Nahr; 2) Matthew 24:27 indicates the Promised Messiah(as) would come from east of Jerusalem; 3) “Sunan ibn Majah” states the Mahdi would appear in the East and “Sahih Muslim” states he would appear east of Damascus; 4) “Sunan Nasai” refers to a group that will perform jihad in India, and Bukhari’s history states this group’s leader would be the Mahdi and his name would be Ahmad; 5) “Jawahir-ul-Asrar” by Sheikh Ali Hamza Malik-ut-Tusi gives the name of the Mahdi’s town as Kad’ah, a fact which Hadrat Khawaja Ghulam Farid(rta) agreed with; and 6) Sahih Bukhari” includes a hadith that a man from the Persians would restore the Faith of Islam. All of these prophecies are fulfilled by the Promised Messiah(as) who was born in the town of Qadian in northern India.



Language: The Promised Messiah(as) natively spoke Persian, Punjabi, and Urdu, the language of his birthplace. Other prophecies indicated he would stammer in his speech, which was particularly the case with Arabic, which was not his native tongue. However, he would later master this language through divine revelation.

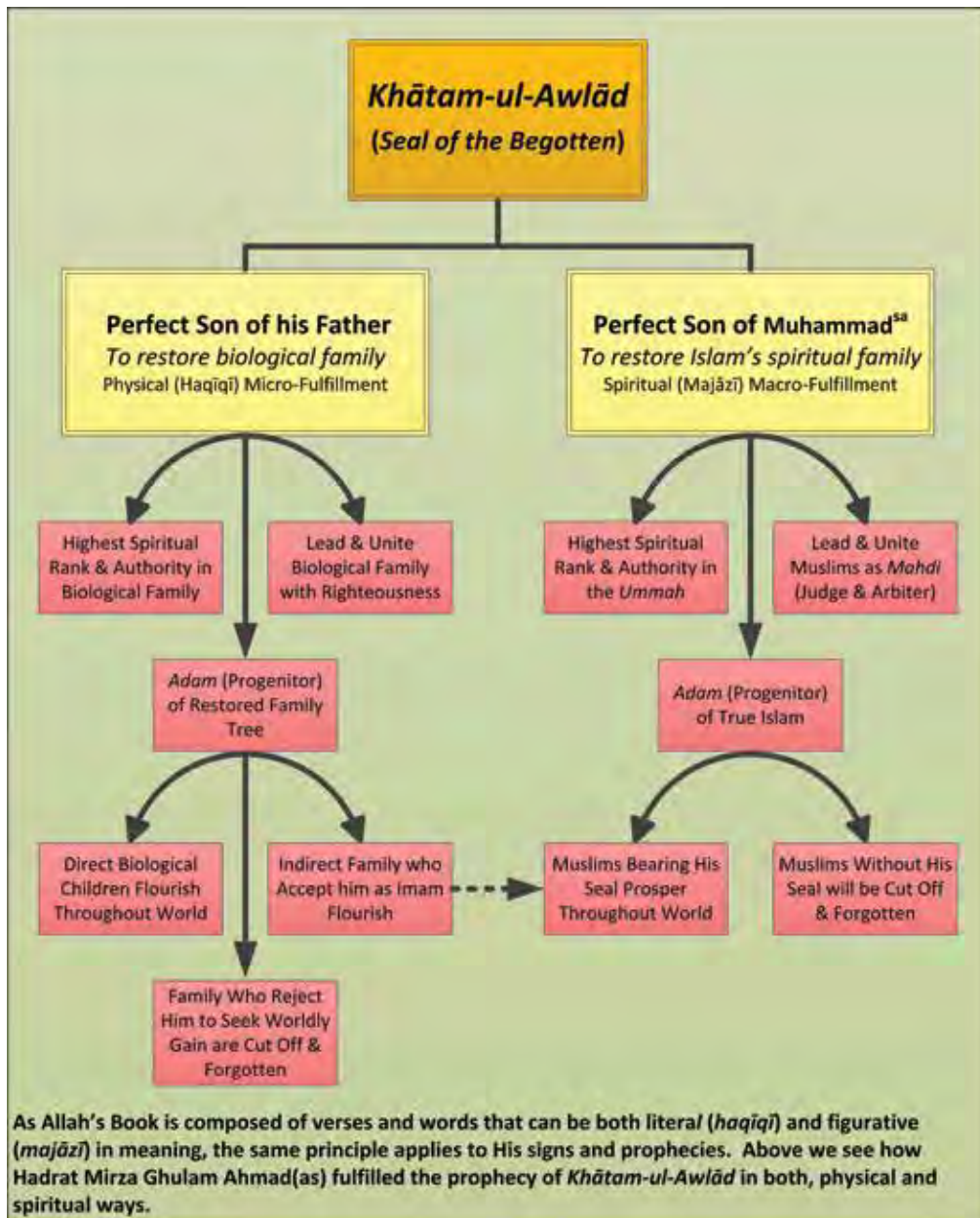
Footsteps of Seth: Adam and Eve initially had two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain had gone astray and fled after he murdered his brother Abel out of jealousy. Thereafter, Seth was bestowed upon Adam as a gift according to Ibn ‘Arabi, and through this son, Adam’s righteous progeny would prosper and multiply throughout the world. It would be in this very spirit that the Promised Messiah(as) would be the son through whom the spiritual family of the Holy Prophet(sa), as well as his biological family, would live on to multiply and prosper throughout the world. In this way the Promised Messiah(as) became the progenitor like Adam(as).

Adam(as) – the Progenitor

Just as the spiritual family of the Holy Prophet [i.e., the Muslim ummah] lost its glory when it pursued materiality, so did the biological family of the Promised Messiah. The Promised Messiah(as) states in *Rūhānī Khāzā'in*, Volume 21, Pages 112 - 113 :

“...And one reason why God has named me Adam is that the spirituality of mankind had experienced a kind of death, in general, in this age. Hence, God had made me the Adam of new life. And, in this small statement, there is a hidden prophecy that as the progeny of Adam spread in the entire world, so will my spiritual and biological progeny spread in the entire world.”

Here the Promised Messiah(as) alludes to how he fulfilled Ibn ‘Arabi’s honorific title *Khātām-ul-Awlād* both, spiritually and physically. He fulfilled this title spiritually by first attaining the highest rank and authority in the Muslim ummah and thereafter “fathering” a community that would spread the pure teachings of Islam universally all over the world. The members of his community would be his spiritual progeny. In this “macro” fulfillment of the prophecy, he would be the Seal of the Children of the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa), or in other words, the greatest spiritual child and authority of the Holy Prophet(sa).



On a physical level, his biological progeny would spread throughout the world. In this “micro” fulfillment of the prophecy, he would be the Seal of the Children of his parents, or their greatest biological child. He would restore honor to a noble family which had fallen astray towards the love of this world. This is further corroborated by the Promised Messiah’s revelation documented in the book entitled “Tadhkirah,” as follows:

“Your house will be filled with blessings and I shall perfect My favors unto you and you will have a large progeny from blessed women...and your progeny will spread greatly in different lands. Every branch of your collaterals will be cut off and will come to an end soon through childlessness.²⁰² If they do not repent, God will send chastisement after chastisement upon them, until they are completely wiped out. Their houses will be filled with widows and God’s wrath will descend upon their walls. But if they turn to God, He will turn to them in mercy. God will spread your blessings about and will revive a ruined house through you and will fill a fearful house with blessings. Your progeny will not be cut off and will flourish till the end of days. God will maintain your name with honor till the day when the world comes to an end and will convey your message to the ends of the earth...

[Announcement of February 20, 1886, Majmu’ah Ishtiharat, Vol 1, pp. 102-103]”

Explaining the above comment, “Every branch of your collaterals will be cut off and will come to an end soon through childlessness,” the “Tadhkirah” reports footnote #202 as:

“When the Promised Messiah(as) made his claim, there were about seventy men in his [collateral] family. But now the progeny of none of the seventy – except those who are physical or spiritual progeny of the Promised Messiah(as) – is alive. [Hadrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II(ra), al-Hakam, nos. 19-22, dated May 21-28 and June 7-12, 1943, p. 10]”

Just as one of the meanings of Khātām-un-Nabiyyeen is that no prophet can arise unless his truth is attested to by the Holy Prophet(sa), Khātām-ul-Awlād means that no one can claim to be a true follower of the Holy Prophet(sa) unless they are attested to by the Promised Messiah(as). This is why the ah-Hadith have entitled him the Arbiter and Judge to decide between the differences that had fragmented the Muslim ummah. Khātām-ul-Awlād has a secondary meaning, which is that no descendent of the Promised Messiah’s biological family would live on without his righteousness attested to by the Promised Messiah(as). In all cases, those who fail to bear the Holy Prophet’s or the Promised Messiah’s seal of attestation will be cut off and forgotten.

Mirza Hadi Baig

Mirza Muhammad Sultan

Mirza Abd-ul-Baqi

Mirza Muhammad Baig

Mirza Ja’far Baig

Mirza Allah Din

Mirza Dilawar

Mirza Muhammad Aslam

Mirza Muhammad Qa’im

Mirza Faid Muhammad

Mirza Gul Muhammad

Mirza Ata Muhammad

Mirza Ghulam Murtada

**Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as)
of Qadian
1835-1908**

Persian Lineage of the Promised Messiah(as)

Conclusion:

Khilāfah is instrumental to the success of the Muslim ummah. As this institution mirrors the paradigm of the One True God, Who maintains order within the universe, its absence would spell destruction, disorder and chaos. This describes the very condition of the Muslim world today, where savagery is pursued over civility. Muslims boast of killing each other, and targeting innocent and unsuspecting victims, as if they’ve committed some brave act worthy of praise.

Muslims are desperately trying to resurrect the institution of Khilāfah to remedy this crisis. Regardless of the group they belong to – the Muslim Brotherhood, Jamaat-e-Islami, ISIL, Hamas, CAIR, ISNA, ICNA, etc. – they all recognize this fundamental deficiency in the Muslim world. However, until they recognize the true and legitimate heir, the Khātām-ul-Awlād, they can never sustain success. Any claimant to Khilāfah who fails to bear the seal or bay’ah of the Promised Messiah(as) is a usurper, and will certainly be cut off by Allah. This is the Promise of Allah.

And in the end, all praise belongs to Allah.



ESTABLISHMENT SHARI'AH OF THROUGH KHILAFAT

By Imam Rizwan Khan

With the extreme views about Shariah and its establishment again finding their way to the forefront, the question arises: Do Ahmadi Muslims want to establish the Shariah in the United States?

Allah Almighty says, **"But no, by your Lord, they are not believers until they make you (Holy Prophet) judge in all that is in dispute between them and then find not in their hearts any demur concerning that which you decidest and submit with full submission" (Al-Nisa', 4:66).**

Hadrat Musleh Maud(ra), the second Khalifah of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, described that there are two types of religions: those that do not get involved in matters of the government, but which "confine their jurisdiction to certain types of prayers and doctrines, and treat worldly matters as separate" (Khilafat e Rashida, 13); Christianity is an example of such a religion. Then there are those that get involved in matters of government: "the followers of these faiths must accept the authority of religion in the affairs of government. Individuals and societies must abide by these injunctions as obligatory, just as they accept doctrines and commandments like prayers and fasting that affect personal life" (Khilafat e Rashida, 18). Judaism is an example of such religions, as is Islam.

"The Muslims, who are bound by Islamic directives in a purely religious organization, are also not free in the matter of the organization of state, and are under obligation to submit to the organization of the state established by Islamic sharia. Even one glance at the Holy Quran and sayings of the Holy Prophet(sa) shows manifestly that Islam is not among the religions of the first category mentioned above but is of the second category. Islam issued commandments not only for certain beliefs and individual behaviour, but also for government and law." (Khilafat e Rashida, 20)

These laws about governance were revealed through the Holy Quran because humanity is in need of a perfect teaching on both an individual level and on a social level. As it is the responsibility of Muslims to persuade the world to accept both the individual and spiritual teachings of Islam, and the societal and worldly teachings of Islam.

"This is because the God Who commands us to pray, fast, perform Hajj, and pay Zakat has also given guidelines for the political affairs and organization of a country. It cannot be said that every nation and every country is at liberty to invent an organization of its own choice; rather, it has to follow Islamic rules in all spheres of life." (Khilafat e Rashida, 21-22)

One of the purposes of Ahmadiyyat is to establish both the individual and societal teachings of Islam in the world. The first advent of Islam was at the time of the Holy Prophet(sa), and the second advent of Islam is at the time of the Promised Messiah(as); both advents have unique objectives.

"Now these verses (61:10) indicate that at the time of the first advent, the religion was established in the world on a firm basis. The stage to make it dominant over all other religions coming later at the time of the second advent, the mission having a twofold object: (i) to bring people to Islam with persuasion on the basis of reason and argument, and (ii) to eliminate other cultures and civilizations, to make the Islamic civilization prevail everywhere in the world. This is why Allah has said that He raised the Promised Messiah so that He should make Islam prevail over all other religions." (Real Revolution, 143)

The prevalence of Islamic civilization does not simply mean that the Shariah is to be established, but that Islamic values are to become the ideals of the world. The spread of Islam is to be in spirit and in form.

"The dominance that is here spoken of is the same kind of dominance which the Western type of culture holds over the world today. Our task thus is to make the Islamic philosophy of life prevail in the world at any rate, to the same extent Western civilization prevails in the world at this time, which means that even though there might still continue to be some Christians, some Hindus, and some Jews in the world, the culture of each and all of them should be suffused with Islamic values, as all other types of culture today carry manifest marks of being dominated by Western ideas. Just as today all seem to think that the Western civilization is the best and grandest achievement of man, all should come round to hold the view that the spirit of value inculcated by Islam represent the very best which humanity can aspire to achieve." (Real Revolution, 143-144)

This revolution can only take place by convincing the population of the world of the beauty of Islamic values and ideals. Western cultural values are prevalent in the world today because people are presently convinced that they are true ideals. Despite efforts being made in some places to forcefully resist, they continue to spread. The values of Islam can only be established through persuasion, not by force. Ahmadiyyat will establish the Shariah of Islam in the world; however, it will be done by persuasion, when the majority of people are themselves convinced that Islamic values are superior to the values we presently hold as the ideal.

“These verses of the Holy Quran and revelation of the Promised Messiah are quite clear that his mission is to eradicate the prevailing western civilization, and to establish in its place the Islamic philosophy of life, the Islamic Shariah, the Islamic civilization, the Islamic economic structure, and the Islamic moral and social values.”
(Real Revolution, 146)

Because of misunderstandings, people are often unduly apprehensive of what is meant by the establishment of Islamic Shariah and civilization. However, Muslims establishing Shariah is no different than how any other law is adopted by a country. For example, alcohol is prohibited in Islam, and if the Shariah is brought into effect, then alcohol would be forbidden in society. However, this law would not be forced onto any country. Rather, it will be enacted just as prohibition accepted in 1920 in the United States when a majority of the representatives of the people was convinced of it, through democracy. The establishment of Shariah often brings a mental image of a foreign code of law being imposed on the United States. The real picture is that the American people will be persuaded, through reasoning, of the superiority of Islamic ideals, and they will be adopted by the free will of a convinced population. Ahmadi Muslims seek to establish the ideals of Islamic Shariah in the United States for the same reason that Democrats seek to establish Liberal ideals in the United States, and Republicans seek to establish Conservative ideals in the United States: because we are convinced that our ideals are best for the country. Ahmadi Muslims seek to establish the ideals of Islamic Shariah in the same way that Democrats and Republicans seek to establish Liberal Conservative ideals; through persuasion. The culmination of the establishment of Islamic Shariah through Ahmadiyyat would be when the entire world will be convinced that Islamic values are the true ideals for humanity.

“The fourth stage will be reached when the movement shall present a spectacle of fastawa ala suqihee (and stands firm on its stem), i.e. Islamic states would come into being and even those principles which pertain to the Islamic conception of a state shall come into practical operation, giving one civilization and one culture to all mankind. The expression fastawa ala suqihee used here is very similar to what is said in the Holy Quran in another place in regard to God’s istawa on the arsh (He settled Himself on the Throne). The Islamic civilization, to be established through Ahmadiyyat would be so grand and glorious that it would make other nations open their eyes with wonder, saying that here was indeed a goodly crop.”
(Real Revolution, 158)

Here, the question arises that when the majority of people are convinced of Islamic ideals and the Shariah is established in the United States, what of those people who will not believe in Islam, will the Shariah be imposed on them as well? For this, we need look no further than the example of the Holy Prophet (sa) and how he governed his state. In the Charter of Medina, it was established that,

“All disputes and conflicts would be presented before the Messenger of Allāh for his judgement, and all verdicts would be in accordance with Divine Command (i.e., the Shari’at of every specific people).” (Seal of the Prophets, vol. 2 pg. 27)

The systems of Federal and State government that exist in the United States are similar to what was established by the Holy Prophet(sa) in first Muslim state of Medina. In Medina, there was a central government (i.e. federal government), the head of which was the Holy Prophet(sa) by mutual agreement. There were also various tribes (i.e. state governments), three of which were Jewish, upon whom the Islamic Shariah was not imposed.

“In a way, the foundation of a structured government was established in Madinah, whereby every community, despite being free in its religious and internal affairs, was regulated by a common law and central government.”
(Seal of the Prophets, vol. 2 pg. 27)

When Islamic Shariah will be established in the United States, there will not be any need to make many changes to the government. The Federal government will uphold the basic rights and responsibilities of the citizens based on common principles of the majority of the country, and State governments will have the right to make laws locally according to the ideals of their populace. If the majority of the population of a state is Jewish, they can choose to enact State laws according to the Jewish Shariah, just as various states are presently given freedom by the Federal government to enact laws locally according to their local population. If the majority of the population of a state is Humanist, they can choose to enact state laws according to their ideals.



The question remains, what if a majority Muslim state chooses to enact Shariah law, will the Shariah also be imposed on the non-Muslims of that state? What we presently see in the United States law is the same as that which Islamic law teaches. For example, if the majority of the people of the State of California are of the opinion that capital punishment should be implemented, then that law is also imposed on the minority of the people in California who are opposed to it. Responsibility of government is to represent the majority and protect the minority. Universally in every democracy, laws are to be enacted that represent the ideals of the majority, but they are applied equally to both the majority and minority. The establishment of Islamic Shariah by the majority populations of various States in the United States would be no different.

The purpose of Islam is the establishment of Shariah, which is the ideals that will create individual and social harmony in the world. The purpose of Ahmadiyyat is to bring about the establishment of those ideals. The concept of Shariah has been the object of such misunderstandings and negative propaganda that the mere mention of the word immediately brings negative images to the minds of many. The objective of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is to establish the Shariah of Islam, but with persuasion, with democracy, and without infringing on the inalienable religious freedom of any people.



RELIGION & SCIENCE

Can Robots Have Free Will, Do We?

By Zia H Shah MD, Chief Editor of the Muslim Times

The TOP500 Project ranks and details the 500 most powerful (non-distributed) computer systems in the world. The project was started in 1993 and publishes an updated list of the supercomputers twice a year. The first of these updates always coincides with the International Supercomputing Conference in June, and the second one is presented in November at the ACM/IEEE Supercomputing Conference.

Since 1993, performance of the #1 ranked position, for the most powerful computer in the world, has steadily grown in agreement with Moore's law, doubling roughly every 14 months. As of November 2014, the fastest system, the Tianhe-2 with ability to do 54.9024 quadrillion floating point operations per second, is over 419,102 times faster than the fastest system in November 1993. Where Quadrillion is equal to a thousand trillion or ten raised to the power of fifteen.

These are mind boggling statistics. It seems that there is nothing that the computers cannot do. Tall claims are made by experts in robotics every so often, including that someday they may be their own persons with free will.

The Three Laws of Robotics (often shortened to The Three Laws or Three Laws), to make robots non-threatening to humans and popularized by Hollywood, are:

- 1.A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.
2. A robot must obey the orders given to it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.
- 3.A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.

Despite these laws, those who have seen the movie I Robot, which was nominated for the 2004 Academy Award for best visual effects, would recall that one particularly smart robot began to have dreams and developed free will and became part of revolution to enslave humanity. I do not want to give away the whole story, but only introduce you to this fictional possibility of robots having free will.

Can robots have free will in reality? To get a handle on this question, let us first examine, do humans have free will?

Encyclopedia Britannica describes free will as, "Free will, in humans, the power or capacity to choose among alternatives or to act in certain situations independently of natural, social, or divine restraints. Free will is denied by some proponents of determinism. Arguments for free will are based on the subjective experience of freedom, on sentiments of guilt, on revealed religion, and on the universal supposition of responsibility for personal actions that underlies the concepts of law, reward, punishment, and incentive."



Determinism is a theory that all events, including moral choices, are completely determined by previously existing causes



Free will is the ability of agents to make choices unimpeded by certain prevailing factors. Such prevailing factors that have been studied in the past have included metaphysical constraints (such as logical or theological determinism), physical constraints (such as chains or imprisonment), social constraints (such as threat of punishment or censure), and mental constraints (such as compulsions or phobias, neurological disorders, or genetic predispositions). The principle of free will has religious, legal, ethical, and scientific implications. For example, in the religious realm, free will implies that individual will and choices can coexist with an omnipotent, omniscient divinity that raises certain injunctions or moral obligations for man. In the law, it affects considerations of punishment and rehabilitation. In ethics, it may hold implications for whether individuals can be held morally accountable for their actions. Though it is a commonly held intuition that we have free will, it has been widely debated throughout history.

**Determinism,
on the other hand is a theory
that all events,
including moral choices,
are completely
determined by
previously existing causes.**

Determinism is usually understood to preclude free will because it entails that humans cannot act otherwise than they do. Hard determinists believe people are like highly complex clocks - in that they are both molecular machines.

Degree of belief in Hard Determinism or free will divides philosophers into four groups as outlined in the boxes of the diagram below:

		Free will	
		"Free will" is impossible	"Free will" is possible
Determinism	Physical determinism is true	Hard determinism	Compatibilism
	Physical determinism is false	Hard incompatibilism	Libertarianism

The debate about these four possibilities also leads us into another catch 22, the mind-body problem. In philosophy, the mind-body problem, examines the relationship between mind and matter, and in particular the relationship between consciousness and the brain. The problem was famously addressed by René Descartes in the 17th century, resulting in Cartesian dualism, and by pre-Aristotelian philosophers, in Avicennian philosophy, and in earlier Asian traditions. A variety of approaches have been proposed. Most are either dualist or monist. Dualism maintains a rigid distinction between the realms of mind and matter. Monism maintains that there is only one unifying reality, substance or essence in terms of which everything can be explained.



Hard determinism (or metaphysical determinism) is a view on free will which holds that determinism is true, and that it is incompatible with free will, and, therefore, that free will does not exist. Hard determinism is contrasted with soft determinism, which is a compatibilist form of determinism, holding that free will may exist despite determinism.

de·ter·min·ism

Some of the main philosophers who have dealt with the issues of Determinism are Marcus Aurelius, Omar Khayyám, Thomas Hobbes, Baruch Spinoza, Gottfried Leibniz, David Hume, Baron d'Holbach (Paul Heinrich Dietrich), Pierre-Simon Laplace, Arthur Schopenhauer, William James, Friedrich Nietzsche, Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, Ralph Waldo Emerson and, more recently, John Searle, Ted Honderich and Daniel Dennett.

So strong was the belief in Hard Determinism of Pierre Laplace that he said that given the knowledge of every atomic motion, the entire future of the universe could be mapped out.

Einstein was perhaps also a hard determinist. He felt humans are not responsible for their misdeeds, as they had little choice in the matter. But, he found it hard to extend this amnesty to the crimes of the Holocaust.

If free will is denied what chaos will break loose in human societies as a result of lack of reward and punishment is not the focus of this article.

What we want to focus on is that if Hard Determinism be true and free will be only an illusion, then there is no difference in principle, between humans on the one hand and computers and robots on the other.

All of us have experienced in the last decade or two that a Microsoft word file can be opened in countless computers, which have the word program or one compatible with it. In other words there can be countless substantiations of any file and if it be a popular book, like Harry Potter series, made available on the web, within minutes we could have millions of copies of the file, being read on personal computers and iPads all over the world. Likewise, if Hard Determinism be true, with further development in science and technology, the consciousness of individual humans with all their memories, experiences, ambitions, morals, thoughts and their regrets, being nothing more than firing of neurons in a biological machine or lighting up of bits in a computer machine, could be downloaded in the form of a digital file and then uploaded on countless robotic machines, creating clones of individual humans in the fullest sense of the word and making accountability and free will a joke. If human consciousness and personality is like a software file running on the hardware of a brain, and if it can be downloaded to run on other hardware, then the concept of soul and accountability would have been falsified.

I believe this is unlikely to happen no matter how advanced our understanding and technology becomes. Demonstrating and elucidating this claim will require a book and a lifetime of writing. But, I am taking a short cut here. I am making the claim on the authority of the Holy Quran and banking on my understanding of a verse about human soul:

And they ask thee concerning the soul.

**Say, 'The soul is
by the command of my Lord;
and of the knowledge
thereof you have
been given but a little.'
(Al Quran 17:86)**

For a more detailed study of this verse and human soul, read an article by me in the Muslim Times, Human Soul: The Final Frontier?

Whether Hard Determinism is true for humans or not is certainly debated by the agnostic and atheist philosophers. But, its concepts certainly apply to robots and computers. One may then safely conclude, purely from the study of Hard Determinism that robots will never have free will or a consciousness and a soul that all believers of religion profess that every human has.



ISIS KHILAFAT: WHY IT WILL NOT ESTABLISH?

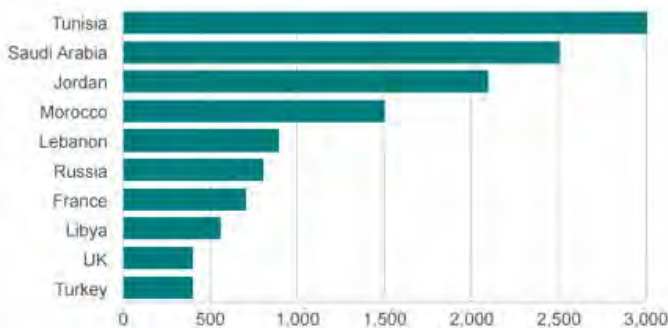
Arif Humayun

The Legitimacy and Sustainability of ISIS Caliphate

The militant Muslim group in Syria and Iraq, also known as ISIS or ISIL, is a Sunni extremist, jihadist, organization. Having captured territory in parts of Syria and Iraq, they have rebranded themselves as The Islamic State or IS. Proclaiming the establishment of Caliphate, their leader has declared himself the Caliph. Skillfully exploiting the symbolic figure of caliph to increase his legitimacy, he added “al-Qurayshi” – the name of Prophet Muhammad’s tribe – to his name. The unashamed brutality practiced by IS since its formation and consequent to the establishment of their Caliphate has terrified governments around the world. Their evil exploitation of Islamic terminology for usurping power has also shocked some in the Muslim world.

In the face of widespread condemnation and military action by a coalition of Western and Muslim countries to stop their advances, IS has succeeded in gaining support from disgruntled soldiers of the Saddam regime and the US armed and trained Sunni militant groups who were later shunned by the Shia dominated Maliki regime in Iraq. Several radicalized Muslim groups, e.g., Taliban factions in Pakistan, have pledged allegiance to the IS Caliphate and hundreds of people, from several countries, are reported to have joined ISIS.

Foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq



Sources: Soufan Group, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence
Upper estimates used.

Estimates of Foreign Jihadis Supporting IS

While many Muslim countries have supported and propagated misrepresented Islamic doctrines for political purposes, their policy U-turn after IS’ startling successes is not enough to convince radicalized groups who also sympathize with IS type ideologies to reverse course. The fruits of this decades-long, deliberate, and widespread misinformation campaign in the Muslim world were captured by a recent Pew Research data which showed the prevalent confusion about doctrines like jihad, sharia, blasphemy and apostasy. Many in Muslim-majority countries favor the implementation of legislative sharia, jihad as a justification for war and capital punishment of blasphemy and apostasy. These misinterpretations forms the bedrock for the violent ideology practiced by IS, Taliban, al-Qaida and similar radicalized groups.

These mixed messages of military action on the one hand and Muslim volunteers supporting IS on the other has baffled people about the legitimacy and sustainability of the IS Caliphate. This article will contrast the Islamic concept of Caliphate with the IS model and highlight their differences. This comparison is critically important to realize how IS and similar groups have tried to dupe people into believing their “Islamic” credentials.

The Concept of Caliphate in Islam

The Arabic word khilafat (caliphate) means succession; the person heading the organization is known as the khalifah (caliph) or the successor to a prophet of God. In Islamic parlance, caliphate is thus an extension of prophethood because the caliphs continue the task of reformation that was initiated by the Prophet. Reformation and moral training of the people and society is a monumental proposition and cannot be completed during the prophet’s life time. The Qur’an refers to the institution of Khilafat and mentions the following kinds of khalifahs (caliphs):

1. Recital of God’s verses/signs to establish firmness of faith in the existence of One God and to worship Him alone.

2. Purification of souls by bringing gradual moral and spiritual changes in human conduct by creating mutual love, sympathy and unity among the believers, and by eradicating sinful inclination.

3. Teaching the Book, that is, the Holy Qur'an which contains God's Law and commandments to establish a just and benevolent society.

4. Teaching wisdom that underlies natural and social laws to increase human knowledge.

These four objectives – spiritual, moral, societal and intellectual enhancement of mankind – continue to be the main objectives of the righteous and “rightly guided” khilafat in the footsteps of the Prophet of Islam. The Islamic institution of Caliphate is thus an embodiment of God's unity. The Caliphate in Islam has to be divinely guided and would not be based on the use of force and brutality.

The Islamic State Caliphate

The Islamic State (IS), is the first and so far the only attempt to resurrect the ‘engineered’ governmental system of the early Muslims through the use of force and coercion. Others similar attempts have failed to gain traction of this engineered system that was first proposed in 1928 by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and by Jama'at-e-Islami in undivided India. Many Muslims believe the radicals' interpretation that caliphate as a divinely sanctioned system of religious monarchy that invests power in the hands of the caliph, who has the sole authority to declare jihad, implement sharia, and to interpret Islamic texts. Many aspirants of political caliphate, including Osama bin Laden, his successor Zawahiri, and the Taliban commanders have called themselves as Amir al-Mu'minin or Commander of the Believers. Their model of Islamic State is shown in Figure 2; their motivation for the creation of Islamic State is to grab power and implement their twisted versions of legislative sharia, violent jihad, blasphemy and apostasy. The destructive consequences, both intended and unintended, of this ideology are discussed elsewhere. Interestingly, none of these foundational principles are from the Five Pillars or the Articles of Faith in Islam.

Discussion

Except for the terminology there is nothing common between the concept of real Caliphate in Islam and that established by IS. Their practices and pronouncements are contrary to Qur'anic injunction of “no compulsion in religion” and the acknowledgement of human diversity (by referring to division of people into tribes) rules out the use of force for enforcing religion.

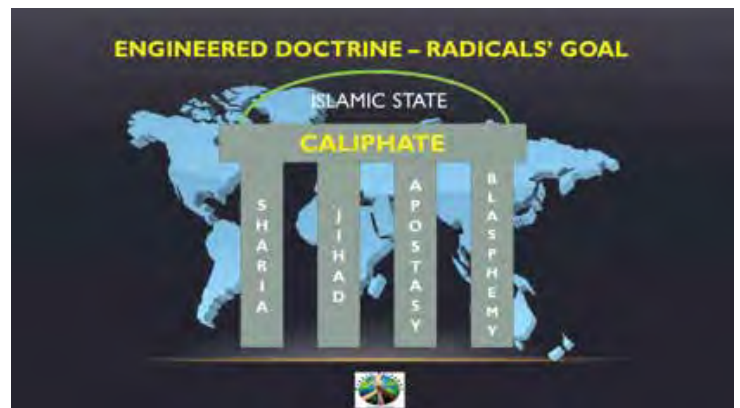
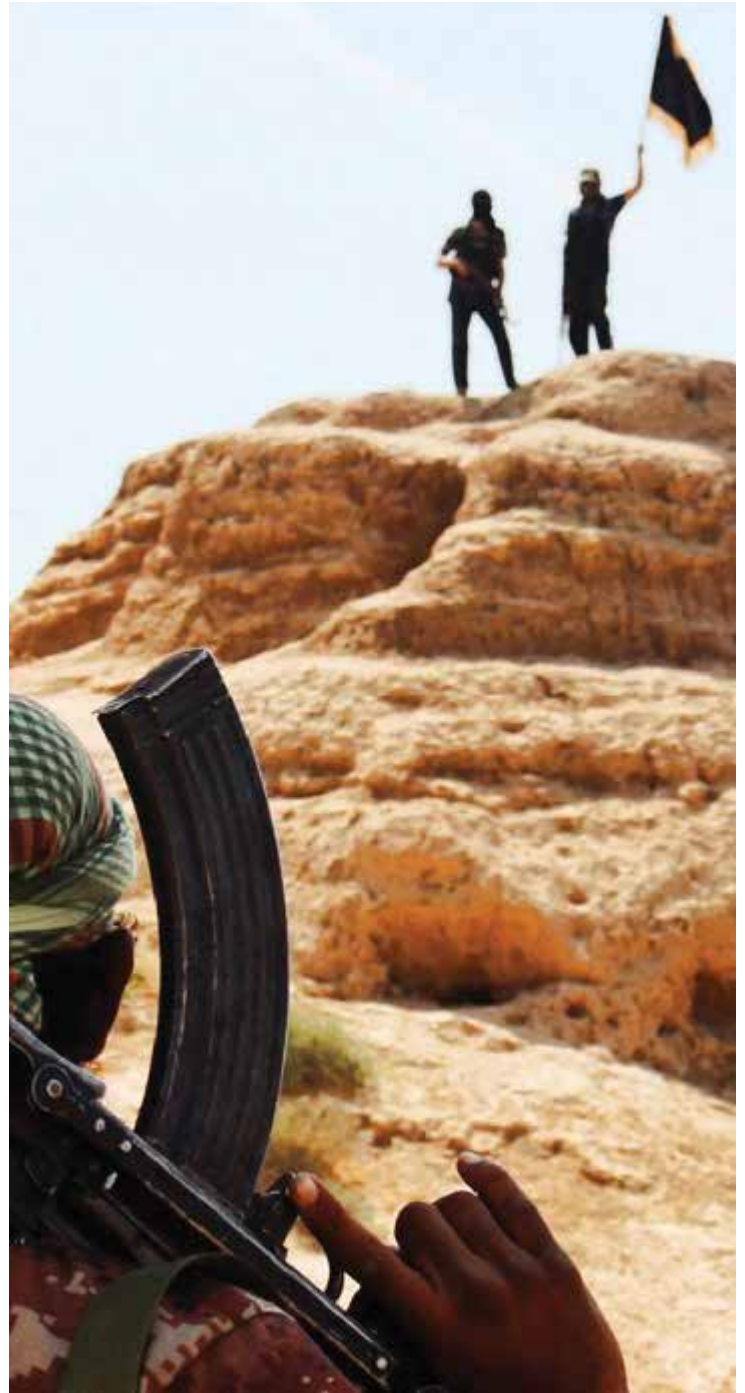


Figure 2. IS' and other Radical groups' model for Islamic State and Caliphate



Figure 3. Objective of Islam's teachings is gradual transformation of people and societies from the instinctive to the moral and ultimately to the spiritual stage

Likewise, Islam precludes the need for uniformity in cultural and social practices as long as they are not in conflict with the fundamental religious teachings. There are no words to condemn IS' abhorrent pronouncement about Slavery in Islam and their boasts of selling captive women as concubines. One of the first things Islam abolished was slavery and IS takes pride in resurrecting that repulsive concept. Islam equates the killing of one innocent individual as being equivalent to killing the entire humankind and saving one individual akin to saving the entire humankind. How can the IS terrorists who have killed people in large numbers and in the most brutal way claim to be the divinely appointed authority among Muslims when they do not conform to the principles of the faith?

In an Islamic Caliphate, believers voluntarily choose to obey the caliph whose role is to establish God's authority to continue nurturing the faith and practices, and preventing its corruption. Moreover, the caliph's role is to interpret the finer points of the faith and provide spiritual guidance to enable people and societies to evolve from the instinctive stage and gradually transform to the moral and ultimately to the spiritual stage (Figure 3). The institution of caliphate in Islam can only be spiritual; governmental politics and using the ideology to grab power has no place in a truly Islamic Caliphate.

Prophet Muhammad(sa) himself practiced the above Qur'anic injunctions when he developed the Charter or Constitution of Medina after migration from Mecca in 620 CE. He established the first community of people with diverse beliefs and allowed equal rights and responsibilities to all group. This is discussed in detail elsewhere and should serve as the model for any subsequent "Islamic State" to follow.

The first caliphate in Islam was established immediately after the Prophet's death in 632 CE and lasted till about 661 CE and was known as the Righteous Caliphate. Later, it became political and dynastic e.g., Umayyads (661-750 CE), the Abbasids (750-1258 CE) who developed legislative shariah to institute a Qur'an compliant system of laws that would evolve amid continuing consultations and discussions between scholars and legislators. They were followed by the Ottomans (1453-1924 CE), and for relatively short periods by other, competing dynasties in al-Andalus, North Africa, and Egypt. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1923, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk founded the Republic of Turkey and formally abolished the system of dynastic Caliphate. The dynastic caliphates were thus formed and terminated by humans; these were political and not spiritual entities.



IS originated as a terrorist group Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad in 1999 and later became known as Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and led the Iraqi insurgency against US-led forces following the 2003 invasion of Iraq. In 2006, it joined other Sunni insurgent groups to form the Mujahideen Shura Council, which consolidated further into the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). In April 2013, the group changed its name to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. It grew significantly under the leadership of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, gaining support in Iraq as a result of perceived economic and political discrimination against Iraqi Sunnis. After entering the Syrian Civil War, it established its presence in the Syrian governorates of Ar-Raqqah, Idlib, Deir ez-Zor and Aleppo. In June 2014, IS had at least 4,000 fighters in its ranks in Iraq; in September 2014 the CIA estimated their numbers to be between 20,000-31,500 fighters. IS had close links to al-Qaeda until February 2014 after which it severed ties with al-Qaida due to a power struggle.

The group's original aim was to establish an Islamic state in the Sunni-majority regions of Iraq. Following its involvement in the Syrian Civil War, this expanded to include controlling Sunni-majority areas of Syria. It proclaimed a worldwide caliphate on 29 June 2014; its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi became the Caliph, and the group renamed itself as the Islamic State. It claims religious authority over all Muslims worldwide, and aims to bring most Muslim-inhabited regions of the world under its political control, beginning with the Levant region, which approximately covers Syria, Jordan, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Cyprus, and part of southern Turkey.

Concluding Comments

The IS model of an Islamic State is a myth. Its foundation (legislative sharia, violent jihad, blasphemy, and apostasy) is based on misrepresented and politically motivated interpretations which are contrary to the Qur'anic teachings. Moreover, the foundational concepts are neither the Five Pillars of Islam nor the Articles of faith which form the core of Islam. Such an Islamic State – a monolithic state based on Sunni extremist interpretation where people are forced to conform – has never existed in Islamic history nor will ever exist. There is no possibility of such state being divinely guided or inspired. The illegitimate state formed by IS will not be sustainable.

The true Islamic Caliphate will be spiritual and follow the Qur'anic teachings as practiced by the Holy Prophet(sa) with the objective of reforming individuals and societies gradually raising them from instinctive to moral and then to spiritual states of being. People will be invited, but not forced, to partner in that transformation. If an Islamic State ever existed, that would be the State of Medina formed by the Holy Prophet(sa); its citizenry included Jews, Christians, Pagans, and Muslims. Its Charter or Constitution guaranteed equal rights and responsibilities to all citizens irrespective of their faith.



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<http://www.pewforum.org/2013/04/30/the-worlds-muslims-religion-politics-society-overview/> (formally known as the REPORT OF THE COURT OF INQUIRY constituted under PUNJAB ACT II OF 1954 to enquire into the PUNJAB DISTURBANCES OF 1953. This report is also referred to as the Munir Commission Report.)
 Allah had promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security and peace after their fear: They will worship Me, and they will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be the rebellious. (Qur'an 24:56).
 And when thy Lord said to the angels: 'I am about to place a vicegerent in the earth; they said: 'Wilt Thou place therein such as will cause disorder in it, and shed blood? — and we glorify Thee with Thy praise and extol Thy holiness.' He answered: 'I know what you know not.' (Qur'an 2:31)
 'O David, We have made thee a vicegerent in the earth; so judge between men with justice, and follow not vain desire, lest it should lead thee astray from the way of Allah.' Surely those who go astray from the way of Allah will have a severe punishment, because they forgot the Day of Reckoning. (38:27)
 Surely, We sent down the Torah wherein was guidance and light. By it did the Prophets, who were obedient to Us, judge for the Jews, as did the godly people and those learned in the Law; for they were required to preserve the Book of Allah, and because they were guardians over it. Therefore fear not men but fear Me; and barter not My Signs for a paltry price. And whoso judges not by that which Allah has sent down, these it is who are the disbelievers. (Qur'an 5:45)
 ibid
 "We have sent to you a Messenger from among you, who recites Our verses/signs (ayaat) to you, and purifies you, and teaches you the Book and wisdom, and teaches you that which you knew not" (Qur'an 2:152).
 On account of this, We prescribed for the children of Israel that whosoever killed a person — unless it be for killing a person or for creating disorder in the land — it shall be as if he had killed all mankind; and whoso gave life to one, it shall be as if he had given life to all mankind. And Our Messengers came to them with clear Signs, yet even after that, many of them commit excesses in the land. (Qur'an 5:33)
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DIVINE GUIDANCE BRINGS IN THE NEW KHALIFAH

By Rabia Khan

Watching the election of the fifth Khalifah of the Promised Messiah(as) on Muslim Television Ahmadiyya (MTA) a feeling of faith and peace came over me. The lights shone on Fazl Mosque, London, eyes were riveted to the entrance of the mosque, as the Imam of the mosque stepped out of the doorway and announced the name Masroor Ahmad, may God strengthen his hand. When the camera focused on the newly appointed Khalifah, he was lit up and the image was beautiful and peaceful. He was presented the coat and ring of the Promised Messiah(as). In his first address, he asked the followers of the Ahmadi movement to pray, and read the words of Bait (Initiation) to everyone across the world. This event took place 11 years ago, after news that the fourth successor of the Promised Messiah(as) had passed from this world and the Electoral College came together to elect his successor.

There are two lines of Khilafat. The first is the one after the Holy Prophet(sa), called Khilafat-e-Rashida, and the second is the line of Khilafat after the Promised Messiah(as) which is what I have directly experienced in Hadrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad(rta) and Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad(aba), the fourth and fifth Khalifahs successively.

The Electoral College is what Ahmadiis think of when we think of how election of the Khalifah takes place. It is made up of members who after the demise of one Khalifah come together and vote for the next Khalifah. However, prayer catalyses the process into a Divine election where what happens is a reflection of Divine will.

For example after the demise of the first Khalifah after the Promised Messiah(as) on March 13th 1914, some people gathered outside Noor Mosque In Qadian, before the time of any Electoral College. As the son-in-law of the Promised Messiah(as) read out the will of the First Khalifah(ra), and asked the people to nominate a Khalifah in accordance with the will, Hadrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad(ra) the Promised Reformer and son of the Promised Messiah(as) was nominated. Despite his hesitation and surprise at being elected, he realized the commitment came on his shoulders at the hand of God, and he took Bait from the people and became Khalifah.

Now interestingly, Hadrat Abu Bakr(ra) was the first Khalifah of the Holy Prophet(sa) and the series of events leading to his election as Caliph had the hand of God in it.

We will see there was also no official Electoral College then, but how seamlessly the transition came about, and Muslims believe this occurred simply from the blessings of Allah. During the Syrian expedition, when the Holy Prophet(sa) was sick, revelation was received of victory. At this point the Holy Prophet(sa) made the observation that if the Lord gave His servant the option to stay on earth or return to Allah, the Holy Prophet himself would wish to return to Allah. At this statement, Hadrat Abu Bakr(ra) got upset and exclaimed "Fain would we ransom thee with the sacrifice of our fathers, our mothers and ourselves," and the Holy Prophet(sa) replied "Were it permissible to take a human being as a devoted friend, I would have chosen Abu Bakr, but such love is permissible only for Allah." This demonstrated the deeper spiritual awareness Hadrat Abu Bakr(ra) had, that he realized the Holy Prophet(sa) was talking about his impending death.

The next event in Abu Bakr's impending assignment to Khalifah was when the Holy Prophet(sa) could not lead prayers anymore, the Holy Prophet forcefully directed Hadrat Aisha(ra) to give Hadrat Abu Bakr the job of leading the prayer. Hadrat Abu Bakr(ra) began to lead prayer, and still the Holy Prophet(sa) was not strong enough to resume this position of authority due to sickness.

The final event that resulted in Hadrat Abu Bakr's election: when news of the Holy Prophet's death came, Hadrat Abu Bakr was in the suburb of the city and hastily returned. Just hours before he passed away, the Holy Prophet(sa) was in the mosque addressing the people, so there was some disbelief at the news, and Hadrat 'Umar(ra), in a frenzied state was strongly convincing people that the Prophet(sa) was alive. Hadrat Abu Bakr(ra) on seeing this, went to see the beloved Prophet's body, and came out from his house, and he himself addressed the people. He recited "Thou wilt die and they will die" (39:31) "Muhammad is but a Messenger; of a surety, all Messengers before him have passed away. If then, he die or be slain, will you turn back on your heels?" (3:145). The truth hit everyone like a lightening bolt, and they all sobbed, knowing for certain from these words, the Prophet(sa) was dead.

Some men started electing a leader and Hadrat Abu Bakr(ra) went to them to tell them not to do it this way, but to choose a Quraish leader, and nominated Hadrat Umar(ra) and Abu Ubaidah(ra). At this, Hadrat Umar turned around

and nominated Hadrat Abu Bakr, saying how the Holy Prophet loved him the best of all, and on holding his hand, pledged allegiance to him. So was the first successor of the Holy Prophet(sa) chosen, a true Khalifah, and everyone's heart turned towards the Divinely elected leader, Hadrat Abu Bakr(ra), whilst the first pledge to a Khalifah was also recited at his hand. All praise belongs to Allah.

These inspiring incidences are the example of the Divine origins of Khilafat. Khilafat is a real institution in Islam, and it is part of a Muslim's faith. The Quran clearly talks about the establishment of Khilafat which will keep Islam's teachings and Muslim's strong.

In Sura Al Nur 24:56 it says, "Allah has promised to those among you who believe, and do good works that He will surely make them the Successors in the earth, as He made successors (from among) those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security (and peace) after their fear: They will worship Me. (and) they will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be rebellious."

In Hadrat Musleh Maud's book '*Khilafat-e-Rashida*', he argues the need for the organization of the Muslim world on a religious precept. Khilafat is that religious organization. He links Khilafat-e-Rashida directly to the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) and to start criticizing the Khalifahs like Hadrat Abu Bakr(ra) for example, would be to attack the Prophet which is an impossibility. It would be like saying the Holy Prophet's work had no religious sanction. Another evidence to the detail of laws Islam provides its followers is that there are some commands, and some detailed laws, that people have to apply some logic to to use.

The Khalifahs instrumentally guide their body of people in these matters of law. The second Khalifah(ra) gives his own example of people asking if a father can announce the marriage ceremony of his daughter who has not yet reached puberty. The Second Khalifah(ra) on studying books of jurisprudence advises his people that the girl after puberty ultimately approves or objects to the match. With this leadership, humans can be rightly guided.

Another verse in the Holy Quran supports the notion of humans being guided by an institution, is chapter 3 verse 105: "And let there always be among you a body of men who should invite to goodness and enjoin virtue and forbid evil. And it is they who shall prosper". It is noteworthy that the First Khalifah after the Promised Messiah(as) recited this verse in his first address as leader of the Ahmadiyya organization. The verse is a description of the role of Khalifah, and the guidance to good it ultimately brings.

As I recall just as the death of one Khalifah brings about a shock to the whole core of the followers, as in the time when the Fourth Khalifah of the Promised Messiah(as), Hadrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad passed away, a calm and focus on prayers also comes about in the community, and faith in the new Khalifah is instilled in the hearts of the community upon his announcement. And this is what I recall on Muslim TV Ahmadiyya (MTA), the shining light on that area on Fazl mosque London at that time of the evening lit up the whole scene and the followers fell into prostration during their Maghrib and Isha prayers. Khilafat was to continue, all praise belongs to Allah Lord of all the Worlds.



KHILAFAT AMONG MUSLIM SUFI ORDERS

Mubasher Ahmad, M.A., LL.B.

After the Rightly Guided Khilafat of Islam was over, Muslim rulers became monarchs; consequently several Sufi Orders emerged among Muslims as a reaction to counter materialism, lavish lifestyle and unjust rule of those monarchs and the rich elite. As defined by one of the Sufi leaders, "A Sufi is the one who has purified his heart and made it completely for Allah. He is the one who follows the faith decreed by Allah, the one who sacrifices his heart, self and spirit, and offers everything as a sacrifice for the sake of the love of Allah. His speech, behavior and character are from Allah, by Allah and for Allah. He brings annihilation upon himself where his worldly desires are concerned. He uses material resources of the world for the sake of Allah alone -- to seek His pleasure" (1). There are hundreds of Sufi Orders, but the following are the most well-known: The Qadari Order initiated by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (1077-1166); the Suhrawardi Order started by Sheikh Shahab-ud-Din Suhrawardi (1145 – 1234); the Chishti Order attributed to Khawaja Muin-ud-Din Chisti Ajmairi (1139 – 1236); the Shadhili Sufi Order founded by Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili (1196 – 1258); the Mevlevi Order attributed to the Persian poet and jurist Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207 – 1273); and the Naqshbandi Order founded by Sheikh Muhammad Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandiya (1317 – 1389). There are various names and titles used for a Sufi master, such as Murshid, Peer, Sheikh, and Sarkar. All the founders of these Orders were saintly persons renowned for their individual piety, theological knowledge of the religion of Islam and its jurisprudence. Their mission was to enshrine the purest forms of religious and spiritual experience, ensuring a person's closeness and unity with God.

During the Rightly Guided Khilafat of Islam the entire Muslim world was led by a single khalifah (caliph) during his period of office as their spiritual leader as well as administrative head of State. Thus, the Rightly Guided Khilafat encompassed both religious and political domains. The use of the title Khalifah is customary among the deputies, the representatives and the successors of the leaders of a Sufi Order. However, in Sufi Orders the tradition of Khilafat is somewhat different as it only has the spiritual domain. For example, Farid-ud-Din Masud of Shakar Ganj (d. 1265) was a Khalifah of Bakhtiar Kaki; and then his Khalifah was the revered Nizam-ud-Din Auliya (d.1325) of Delhi, India. They and other Sufi Khalifahs ruled over the hearts of millions of their adherents, but none of them had any political domain.

A supreme leader of any Sufi Order, usually known as Murshid, can nominate a Khalifah as his deputy in his lifetime, and send him to other locations to represent him. Sometimes, the Murshid bestows the status of Khilafat upon one of his disciples under Divine revelations. At other times, he may appoint a disciple as his Khalifah if he finds him ready to act as his deputy. For example, Qutb-ud-Din Bakhtiar Kaki (d.1235 AD) was a contemporary of Muin-ud-Din Chishti -- the founder of the famous and highly respected Chishtiyya Sufi Order, and at the same time he was his principal Khalifah. It is also a tradition in some Sufi Orders that the Murshid gives his Khalifah to wear a special garment to wear. It is a cloak/Sufi dress called "Khirqah" a symbol of his authority for carrying on his mission. For example, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani received his Khirqah from his teacher Sheikh Qazi Abu Sa'ad Mubarak (2).



The Sufi Khalifahs were held in great esteem, and they exercised moral and spiritual authority over the hearts and minds of millions. They laid emphasis on piety, attaining nearness to God through these esoteric doctrines and practices. They taught resistance to worldly temptations. They demonstrated in their personal lives the ways to attain nearness to God through mystical practices. They were saintly persons with full faith in the power of prayer. They experienced true dreams and visions, received personal revelations, and performed miracles. There are several moral qualities that a Sufi Khalifah is presumed to possess. Among them are the qualities of love, compassion, forgiveness, truthfulness, generosity, courage and justice.

If a Sufi Murshid dies without appointing a Khalifah in his life, then his prominent and saintly disciples (called Murids) get together to elect his Khalifah who is their new Murshid. They may elect a Khalifah from among the family of the deceased Murshid, or from among his disciples. Mostly the Sufi leaders get together on the demise of their Sheikh/Murshid to mourn his death for 40 days, and then on the fortieth day (known as Chehlum) they elect their new spiritual leader. However, if the disciples are unable to reach a decision regarding their next Khalifah, the matter can be taken to an Islamic court, and the Qazi can appoint a successor.

It is imperative for members of a Sufi Order to take an oath of allegiance at the hand of a Sufi Khalifah or Murshid. This formal oath is called "Ba'it" (transaction/ to be sold), and it bonds the disciple with the teacher spiritually speaking. This process of taking "Ba'it" is based on the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the practice of Prophet Muhammad(sa). This refers to the historical event when the Prophet(sa) took a pledge of allegiance from his followers at Hudaibiyah, the Holy Qur'an states:

"Verily, those who swear allegiance to you (the Prophet), indeed they swear allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is over their hands. So whoever breaks his oath breaks it to his own loss; and whoever fulfils the covenant that he has made with Allah, He will surely give him a great reward" (48:10).

In the same Surah, in verse 19, the Holy Qur'an states:

"Surely, Allah was well-pleased with the believers when they were swearing allegiance to you (the Prophet) under a tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down tranquility on them with a victory at hand."

Thus, taking of Ba'it at the hand of a Sufi Khalifah is deemed to be a pledge made with Allah Himself. In Sufi Orders, the Ba'it is usually taken in person, but if the Murshid lives at greater distance, then the Murid can take the pledge of allegiance through writing a letter, or the Murshid can authorize his Khalifah to take Ba'it from those who are living within his jurisdiction. In this way the Sufi Khalifah plays an important role in representing his Murshid as his deputy.



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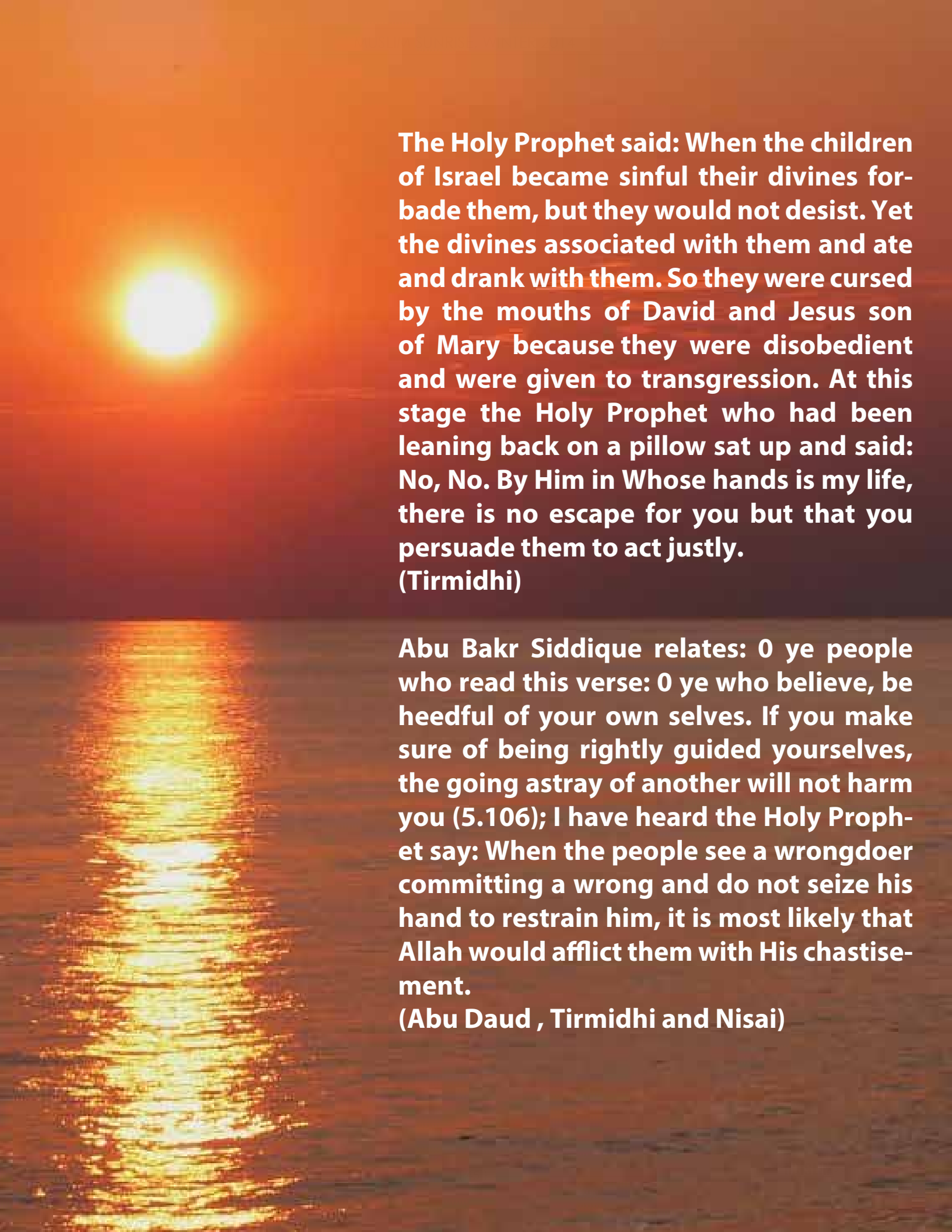


AAOITH

SAYINGS OF THE
PROPHET
MUHAMMAD(sa)

Abu Sa'id Khudri relates that he heard the Holy Prophet say: He who from among you observes something evil should reverse it with his hand; if he is unable to do that he should condemn it with his tongue; if he is unable to do that he should at least resent it in his heart; this is the lowest degree of faith. (Muslim)

Ubadah ibn Samat relates: We made a covenant with the Holy Prophet to hear and to obey in adversity and in prosperity; in hardship and in ease; to endure being discriminated against, and not to dispute the assumption of authority by others, except in a case of open repudiation of faith such as is condemned by clear authority; to tell the truth in every contingency and not to mind in that behalf any reproach or rebuke. (Bukhari and Muslim)



The Holy Prophet said: When the children of Israel became sinful their divines forbade them, but they would not desist. Yet the divines associated with them and ate and drank with them. So they were cursed by the mouths of David and Jesus son of Mary because they were disobedient and were given to transgression. At this stage the Holy Prophet who had been leaning back on a pillow sat up and said: No, No. By Him in Whose hands is my life, there is no escape for you but that you persuade them to act justly. (Tirmidhi)

Abu Bakr Siddique relates: O ye people who read this verse: O ye who believe, be heedful of your own selves. If you make sure of being rightly guided yourselves, the going astray of another will not harm you (5.106); I have heard the Holy Prophet say: When the people see a wrongdoer committing a wrong and do not seize his hand to restrain him, it is most likely that Allah would afflict them with His chastisement. (Abu Daud , Tirmidhi and Nisai)



NEWS VIEWS, '& REVIEWS

Welcome to this week's ALL TOGETHER, the podcast dedicated to exploring how religious ideas and spiritual practice inform and shape our personal lives, our communities and our world. The show is hosted by Rev. Paul Brandeis Raushenbush, the Executive Editor of HuffPost Religion.

This week we talk to author Karen Armstrong on:
The Relationship Between Religion and Violence.

and has not contributed to violence over human history.

Armstrong told Raushenbush that she took on the project to explore this question for herself as well as to respond to the those who blithely insist that religion is the cause of violence. As she writes in the introduction to her book:
:As one who speaks on religion, I constantly hear how cruel and aggressive it has been, a view that eerily, is expressed in the same way almost every time: 'Religion has been the cause of all major wars in history.'"



No, Religion Does Not Cause All Wars

A Conversation With Karen Armstrong

Karen Armstrong: "All religions are designed to teach us how to live, joyfully, serenely, and kindly, in the midst of suffering."

Religious scholar Karen Armstrong has written books on religious topics ranging from Muhammad, to the Buddha to the History of God. She is also known as the founder of the Charter for Compassion, which promotes the principles of compassion in cities and communities around the world. Her latest book *Fields of Blood* Religion and the History of Violence chronicles how religion has,

In her conversation with Raushenbush Armstrong convincingly refutes this 'odd remark' as she calls it, first of all by reminding the listener that the two World Wars of the 20th century were not fought over religion.

In her book and in this conversation with Raushenbush, Armstrong makes a case for better understanding the interplay between religion and violence as a way to reduce violence in the world and to increase compassion.

Source: huffingtonpost.com

Struggle for religious liberty in Pakistan continues

By Brian Cardile

IRVINE - On a typical morning in the northern Pakistan city of Peshawar, a tailor busied himself preparing for the day's customers. Moments later he was in police custody.

His crime? Hanging a calendar that bore a Quran verse; by so doing, the man - a practicing Ahmadi Muslim - had blasphemed the Muslim religion, according to Pakistan law. He faced three years in prison, if not a worse fate.

That event took place nearly 30 years ago, but such persecution continues to menace Ahmadis in Pakistan today. Over these decades of oppression, Mujeeb-ur-Rahman, a Pakistani attorney with more than 50 years of experience and himself a practicing Ahmadi, has defended hundreds of blasphemy cases. Rahman, regarded as the "Thurgood Marshall of Pakistan" for his dedication to human rights and oppressed minorities, spoke on Thursday at UC Irvine as a part of a U.S. tour meant to spread awareness of Ahmadi Muslims' plight. "It truly is a politically driven religious apartheid," said Amjad Khan, an attorney with Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, LLP, who has accompanied Rahman on stops along the tour. Khan cites Rahman's writings as inspiring him to attend law school at Harvard. "The most pernicious part, of course, is that these arrests have the backing of law," he said.

The present dire circumstances evolved slowly over Pakistan's history, one that began with expectations for the full complement of modern fundamental freedoms:

"Pakistan was a region designed to be a modern democratic state; this is clearly spelled out," Rahman said, referring to the country's 1956 Constitution ensuring freedoms of speech, religion, expression, and association, and outlining a parliamentary form of government. "But that way is now lost and we have drifted to extremism over a period of time."

One portentous step toward extremism came in 1974 when Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto spurred Parliament to amend the constitution to deem Ahmadis as officially non-Muslim. This had the effect of denying Ahmadis certain political rights but, Rahman says, the amendment's practical impact was not grave: "This hurt us badly, but we took it as a strength," he said. "Our attitude was that Islam is a matter of conscience, a matter of faith. If I'm recognized as Muslim by my God in heaven, what does it matter if I'm not recognized as Muslim by our constitution?"

Matters worsened in 1984, when President General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq - who had assumed dictatorial power under a state of martial law - unilaterally issued Ordinance XX, which effectively forbade Ahmadi Muslims from practicing their faith. The measure banned Ahmadi Muslims from referring to themselves as Muslim or from "posing" as Muslims. Anti-blasphemy laws, added to the criminal code two years later, reinforced the prohibition and set a three-year prison term for violators. Immediately, the ordinance affected the most basic and reflexive actions of Ahmadi Muslims, such as saying their prayers or even "hello." Rahman recalls one man being arrested and sentenced to three years in prison for greeting another man with "Sabaah al-khayr," a ubiquitous salutation in Pakistan, often offered by Muslims and Christians alike, but whose origin is Islamic.



Pakistani civil rights hero, jurist discusses religious oppression

"Day-to-day practices of Ahmadis became criminalized," Rahman said. "There were thousands and thousands of cases." Rahman defended Ahmadis in countless of these cases. Eventually eight appeals made their way to the country's highest court in the 1993 case of Zaheer-ud-din v. The State. The court, with one dissenting judge, dismissed Rahman's appeal using inapposite rationale from U.S. Supreme Court trademark jurisprudence, essentially finding that Ahmadis, by adhering to certain beliefs that diverged from the official state version of Islam, were violating the religion's "trademarks."

Since then, Pakistan courts have prosecuted thousands more Ahmadis on anti-blasphemy grounds, severely impinging their right to the free practice of religion as guaranteed by the state's constitution. Khan is hopeful, though, that mounting international influence may help overturn the laws: Pakistan acceded in 2010 to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which regularly reviews signatories' dedication to ensuring fundamental rights such as the freedom of religion. Khan also hopes that media attention, and renewed efforts in Pakistan courts can eventually turn the tide. "It's a challenge," said Khan, who himself contested Pakistan's anti-blasphemy laws in the United Nations last year. "But I think once you bring the full weight of very like-minded attorneys, and have international attention and the International Commission

of Jurists involved, I think things can begin to change." Rahman, well-versed in American jurisprudence, also is hopeful for the future: "[Former U.S. Supreme Court Chief] Justice Hughes said, 'A dissent in the court of last resort is an appeal to the brooding spirit of the law, to the intelligence of a futurday,'" Rahman said, referring to the 1993 split high court decision. "I am still waiting for the intelligence of that future day."

Daily Journal November 3, 2014

Does Munawwar Hasan know the implications of his views?

By Tahir Ali, November 30, 2014

Addressing last week's Jamaat-e-Islami's (JI) annual gathering in Lahore, former JI Ameer Munawwar Hasan said that it was beyond the system based on elections to overcome the challenges being faced by Pakistan.

"The problems of the society... can only be resolved through adopting and promoting the culture of jihad and Qatal in the country.

We need to wage jihad in the way of Almighty Allah along with democratic struggle to eliminate oppression and injustice from society."

Does Munawwar Hasan know the implications of his views? Will this Qatal be against Pakistani security forces, political and religious leadership, parties or the entire system? Is the state on the wrong side and Taliban on the right or vice versa? Does JI support al-Qaeda?

It is ironical that he was the Ameer of JI and a successor of Maulana Maududi. Did Maududi write his famous book *Al Jihad Fil Islam* on the strategy of Qatal in a Muslim society? Munawwar Hasan himself has never visited the battlefield himself or allowed his family members to go to the front-line. His assertion is likely to be misconstrued as an invitation/permission for violent reformation struggle.

Munawwar Hasan represents a narrative in Pakistan that has many buyers. This narrative looks at democracy and electoral system as a hurdle in change. He dreams of an Islamic revolution, favours use of force to coerce compliance to Shariah, doesn't accept the state boundaries and

believes in Ummah as a political concept, sympathises with militants and considers them Mujahideen, thinks suicide attacks and terrorism are planned and executed by local agencies or Raw, CIA, Blackwater and attributed to Muslims to malign Islam, opposes military operations against militants and urges talks with them and so on.

He is not alone in these views. And there are many reasons — our dysfunctional system of justice and social services delivery system has disillusioned the masses. Private TV channels, intellectuals, religious class and state institutions have played their role to perpetuate and expand this disillusionment. Anti-democracy sentiments have spread especially in religious parties which have traditionally received negligible electoral success. The JUI F talks of democracy, for it have enjoyed sufficient electoral benefits.

JI at A Crossroads

Earlier, Munawwar Hasan had said that JI shared the same ideology with TTP and that the difference was in the tactics that JI employed. But how could JI, a political party that believes in democracy and constitutional rule within Pakistan, and al Qaeda and TTP, militant violent outfits that work for global Khilafat, have same ideology.



There is no room for violent means in the JI strategy. Article 5 of the JI Constitution spells out that for the desired reform and revolution, the Jamaat shall use democratic and constitutional means, i.e., the use of advice and propagation of thought for reforming the mind and character, and preparing public opinion for accepting the desired changes and that this struggle for the realisation of its objectives shall be open and public, and not on the pattern of secret movements.

JI has several advantages vis-à-vis its rivals — discipline, countrywide support, internal democracy and simplicity. Even though Siraj ul Haq, Ameer JI, says ballot paper is the only source of power and reformation, JI is at a crossroads. It has to decide whether it prefers the successful peaceful democratic Turkish model or the failed reactionary/violent Algerian and Egyptian models.

It has to decide whether it has to maintain status quo in its targets, ideology, structure and strategy. Or it has to become an ultra right militant group like al-Qaeda and TTP, or it reviews its plans and performances in the light of careful analyses of failure of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood and Turkey's Justice and Development Party, to shape anew its political vision and mission and become a modern party.

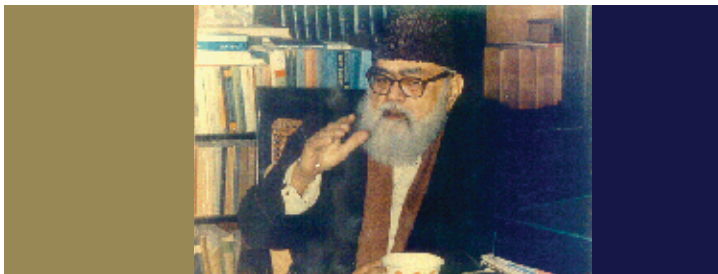
Private Jihad Not Allowed

Jihad is not synonymous with terrorism but opinions differ on what constitutes true jihad. For example, al-Qaeda and TTP assert that they fight for Islam; what is jihad for them is terrorism for others. There is no concept of war without state permission. War has only to be declared and managed by the state and government.

Similarly, administration of justice and execution of punishment is also the sole authority of the state. Women, sick people, children, animals, crops and non-combatants cannot be targeted. And desecration of bodies and targeting of religious places is not allowed.

All big religious schools of thought agree over this. There is no exemption for anyone.

Maulana Maududi never approved of jihad by private outfits. He had even outlawed jihad in Kashmir in 1948 for Pakistan had infiltrated private fighters there without any formal declaration of war. Had he been alive, he certainly would not have liked JI's militant leanings.



Covert War against States Having Diplomatic Relations with Pakistan?

Maulana Maududi refers to Surah Anfaal 8:72, which says that Muslims are not allowed to indulge in secret subversive activities against infidels. He explains: "If we get into a dispute with a nation we are associated in a treaty with, and we realise that dialogue or international arbitration is not helpful in resolving the conflict or that it is bent on using force, it is legitimate for us to use force for its resolution. But this verse makes us morally bound that this use of force should come after clear and open declaration. To undertake covert armed activities, which we are not ready to admit openly, is an immorality which is not taught by Islam."

Muslim States Responsible Only For Their Own Citizens

In this verse, it has also been mandated that Islamic state is in no way responsible for the Muslims living outside its border. Maududi explains: "The responsibility of the Islamic states, as per this verse, is restricted to those living inside its borders....thus Islam has uprooted the very dispute that often originates from international complexities because when a country takes it upon itself to support some minorities living in other countries, it creates such anomalies that cannot be even solved by recurrent wars."

What is Ummah?

Ummah is a spiritual concept but it is unfeasible as a political ideology. Unity is witnessed in Hajj which is a religious gathering. However, when Muslims come together in UN, OPEC, OIC, ECO etc which are political or economic entities, each country tries to safeguard its own interests for the ruler of each is the guardian of his nation who is accountable to/for his subjects. And when religious sects/parties cannot tolerate their rivals in other sects and in political struggle/fields and don't unite into one, how could they argue for global Muslim Ummah neglecting state boundaries.

Muslims live in different countries and though they have sympathies with Muslims, every state pursues its own national interests first.

Siraj ul Haq as a political leader prefers his party interests. As KP Finance Minister, he is not ready to share KP benefits with other provinces. At individual level, a Muslim doesn't let stranger "Muslim brothers" enter his house or let them construct house on his land. Can he travel to another country without a valid visa issued by the other state from the Muslim Ummah? Where is Ummah in this equation?

Confusion?

Religious parties are confused over the genesis of terrorism. Terrorism can either be the work of foreigners/non Muslims or of extremists who are unhappy with the foreign policy. It cannot be two things at the same time. If it is the work of the former, there should be no reason to attribute the rise of terrorism to our alliance with the West and to suggest withdrawal from the coalition or talks with them as the prerequisite for peace in the region. And if it is committed by extremists, foreign agencies get automatically absolved of the blame.

Even if, as they say, Pakistan's alliance with the West is the only reason for terrorism in Pakistan, does this justify the violence perpetrated by the extremists? They are yet to openly declare the TTP's strategy unjust and un-Islamic.

Tahir Ali is an academic and a freelance columnist. He blogs at tahirkatlang.wordpress.com



Questions & Answers

Q1: Was Islam spread by the sword?

No.

Had Muslims adopted a strategy of propagation of Islam by the sword then they would have gone against the following fundamental tenet of the Holy Qur'an:

There should be no compulsion in religion. Surely, right has become distinct from wrong... (Ch.2: V.257)

They would also have gone against the example of the founder of Islam, The Holy Prophet (saw), who always opted for the most peaceful and just strategy in any situation. His example of peace and forgiveness is matchless.

A prime example of his life of peace is when the Muslims, headed by the Holy Prophet (saw), entered Makkah with a ten thousand strong army. At that historic occasion when they were in a position of strength they did not impose Islam on a single person nor punish anyone for not becoming a Muslim, despite the fact that it would have been very easy for them to have done so. Instead the Holy Prophet (saw) left all to practise their religion freely and through this he underlined the true message of Islam.

It is true the Qur'an instructs that each Muslim must take it upon him or herself to propagate the message of Islam in the best of ways and by reason and persuasion, but there is absolutely no room for force of any kind:

Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation and argue with them in a way that is best. Surely, thy Lord knows best who has strayed from His way; and He also knows those who are rightly guided.

(Ch.16: V.126)

Furthermore, for the Holy Prophet(saw) himself the Qur'an clearly stated that his mission was to convey the message of Islam but thereafter it was down to the people to accept or reject this message and this choice was without any coercion of punishment since they were accountable for this decision to God and not to man.

The Qur'an states,

But if they turn away We have not sent thee as a guardian over them. Thy duty is only to convey the Message.... (Ch.42: V.49)

This makes clear that the only duty for Muslims with regards to the spread of Islam is to convey its message and any action that even hints of coercion or force has no basis in Islam.

In this respect it is interesting to note that the largest Muslim population in the world is to be found in Indonesia, which accepted Islam through early dialogue with Muslim traders and holy men. The second largest Muslim population belongs to India which is not even a Muslim country having a Hindu majority. More recently we know that in Europe Islam is the fastest growing religion, yet no sword is used to persuade such people of the beauties of Islam. This emphasis on learning and knowledge as a path to success is captured in the famous saying of the Holy Prophet (saw):

'The ink of the scholar is more precious than the blood of the martyr.'

(Bukhari, Book of Knowledge)

Q2: Are the West and Islam at War?

A: Islam is not at war with the West. Islam is freely practised in the West, sometimes more freely than in countries that claim to be Muslim. Indeed, the last fifty years has seen an unprecedented growth in the number of mosques in North America and across Europe. Muslims are free to follow their faith and are able to publish books and literature, and host open debates on matters of faith with people of all faiths and none.

It is also worth noting that Islam is a global religion so has followers in the West and the East, the North and the South. There are millions of Muslims in Western countries, and in recent history the pinnacle of Islamic civilisation was in Spain when Muslims, Jews and Christians lived in perfect harmony. Islam therefore has no interest in being at war with the West or any other part of the world since it seeks to promote harmony with all. Indeed, the Qur'an teaches Muslims to live in kindness and to have fair dealings with people of all backgrounds (Holy Qur'an Ch.60 V.9 , Ch.4 V.37)

No nation can claim to 'own' Islam or have exclusive access to the faith, since it is a universal religion for all mankind. Arabs have a special affinity for Islam because the major historical events of early Islam and the fact that the Holy Prophet(saw) was born in and lived in Arabia. Also the Holy Qur'an was revealed in Arabic. This may give the impression that when there are disputes between Arab states and the West, that Islam is also in conflict. But in actual fact, these are political disputes, which have nothing to do with Islam, just as conflicts between Christian countries and others have nothing to do with the teachings of Prophet Jesus(as).

Q3: What is Islam's view on terrorism?

Islam categorically rejects and condemns every form of terrorism.

It does not provide any cover or justification for any act of violence, be it committed by an individual, a group or a government. In fact according to Islam, no religion can sanction violence and bloodshed of innocent men, women and children in the name of God, since all religions came from God Who sent His prophets to create peace.

The word Islam literally means peace which is the antonym of terror and it is the obligation of every Muslim to uphold peace. This concept is so deeply rooted in Islam that the Holy Qur'an describes true Muslims as those who:

...walk on the earth in a dignified manner, and when the ignorant address them, they say, 'Peace!' [Holy Qur'an Ch.25: V.64]

The Holy Qur'an in fact champions the sanctity of life,

...whosoever killed a person - unless it be for killing a person or for creating disorder in the land - it shall be as if he killed all mankind; and whoso gave life to one, it shall be as if he had given life to all mankind. [Holy Qur'an Ch.5: V.33]

The same can be observed from the saying of the Holy Prophet(saw):

'The biggest of Al-Kaba'ir (the great sins) are (1) to join others as partners in worship with Allah, (2) to murder a human being, (3) to be undutiful to one's parents (4) and to make a false statement, or said, to give a false

witness.'

(Ref. Bukhari, Vol. 9, Bk. 83, No. 10)

Furthermore, in his famous farewell sermon the Holy Prophet (sa) said,

...to take anyone's life or his property or attack his honour is as unjust and as wrong as to violate the sacredness of this day, this month and this territory.' (Siha Sitta)

This leaves no doubt that in Islam there is no justification whatsoever for terrorism.

Q4: Is suicide bombing ever justifiable ?

No.

First and foremost The Holy Qur'an clearly sets out the prohibition of the taking of one's own life ie suicide,

...And kill not yourselves. Surely Allah is Merciful to you. And whoso does that by way of transgression and injustice, We shall cast him into Fire; and that easy with Allah. (Ch.4: V.30-31)

Suicide amounts to nothing less than murder and is thus repulsive in Islam, which is a religion that champions the sanctity of life,

...whosoever killed a person - unless it be for killing a person or for creating disorder in the land - it shall be as if he killed all mankind; and whoso gave life to one, it shall be as if he had given life to all mankind." (Ch.5: V.33)

The forbiddance of suicide is further observed in the saying of the Holy Prophet(saw),

'... And whoever commits suicide with a piece of iron will be punished with the same piece of iron in the Hell Fire.' Narrated Jundab the Prophet said, "A man was inflicted with wounds and he committed suicide, and so Allah said: My slave has caused death on himself hurriedly, so I forbid Paradise for him.'

(Bukhari Vol. 2, Bk. 23, No. 445)

Suicide is therefore unconditionally forbidden. When it is used as a mechanism to murder others then it becomes an even greater sin. As a protest against intentional suicide the Holy Prophet (saw) has forbidden to observe funeral prayer for a person who commits suicide, [unless the person was mentally ill].



PERSPECTIVE

Successors of God on Earth

Prophet Moses(as) was standing in the court of the Pharaoh. His request was that the Pharaoh should let his people, the Children of Israel, go freely to their homeland, their Promised Land. The Pharaohs had enslaved the Israelites and treated them harshly. They did not care how many of them perished as long as their construction work on lofty buildings continued at the lowest cost. There is a long history of persecution, cruelty and barbaric treatment towards the Israelites by the Pharaohs. All of this was to be forgotten, put behind them, so that a dark chapter of history could be closed. Prophet Moses(as) just wanted to take his people and leave peacefully without any revenge, compensation or demands.

People who are treated as animals, slaves and persecuted over centuries fester rage and feelings of hatred and revenge towards their oppressors. Usually, these erupt into an uprising, with some opportunists fueling the flames of those feelings. Demonstrations, destruction and death follow. If everything works, the slaves would be free but at a high cost of life and a long period of fighting and chaos. Prophet Moses(as) was offering to bypass all of that and peacefully walk away: no revenge, no compensation, no apology. Why would Moses do that?

Moses was a prophet, a successor of God on earth, a khalifah of the Merciful and Compassionate God.

We can travel a many centuries further in history and see the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) at the outskirts of Mecca with ten thousand soldiers ready to take over the city, whose residents had persecuted him and his community for 23 years. They had killed his close friends and relatives, mutilated bodies of pious women and men, ridiculed his followers and dragged converts on hot sandy roads. Even when he wanted to get away from it all in peace, they had followed him and put a bounty on his head.

All of this would have been forgotten, closing a dark chapter in history, with all savages forgiven. All the Meccans had to do was lay down their arms and stay inside their homes that day. Then he announced a general amnesty and that there was no blame on them for all the atrocities of the past. They were free and clear of all charges. This was the time of payback; to take revenge, satisfy the feelings of anger built over 23 years. But the 10,000 were saints under the command of Prophet Muhammad(sa). Why did Prophet Muhammad(sa) take the option of forgiveness?

Muhammad was a prophet, a successor of God on earth, a khalifah of the Merciful and Compassionate God.

We can go back in history of religion for thousands of years and discover that prophets of God have never taught hate and always preferred compassion and love for humanity. It was their enemies and enemies of God who displayed hate and committed hateful crimes against humanity.

Prophet Jesus(as) preached compassion, turning the other cheek, and giving more than asked. What was wrong with this teaching of compassion and humility? His opponents demanded that he be put on the cross. I think I have made my point.

**There are
only two kinds of people
in this world,
children of God and children of Satan.
It is up to us to recognize others whether
their behavior is that of the children of God
or children of Satan.
More importantly,
we need to assess ourselves
whose children are we.**

If anyone or any group whether religious, political or ethnic, practices hate, you should know that he does not belong to God. His prophets established this fact over thousands of years. It does not matter whether the person or group propagating hate is Muslim, Christian, Jew or Hindu. None of their prophets preferred hate. The hate mongers belong to the enemies of their prophets who were champions of hate and hateful behavior.

If a group like ISIS, Al-Qaeda, IRA, Nazis, KKK or by any other name professes hate against Christians or Jews, it is in opposition to the behavior of Prophets Muhammad(sa), Jesus(as) and Moses(as); especially if they claim to be the khalifahs or successors of the Merciful and Compassionate God.

The Holy Qur'an, in Chapter An-Naml (27:62 to 65), has pointed out how God has provided the mountains, the oceans and rivers, the winds and clouds and all pleasant things for human beings, as well as acceptance of prayers. In the same verses, He mentions that He appoints successors (khalifahs) on earth as well. The appointment of successors is mentioned in the list of wonderful things God has bestowed upon mankind. It is through His mercy and compassion that He provides us a khalifah just as He has provided the necessary and beautiful essentials around us.

Successorship is a blessing for mankind. It cannot have any share of hate, let alone criminal behavior as killing innocents, taking hostages, butchering human beings, destroying property and inciting others to do the same.

In the end, the successorship established by God will always prevail. This is also proven in the history of religion over centuries.

Meanwhile, we can keep on doing the jihad to make sure that we are among the children of God and watch out and stay clear of the children of Satan as they appear for their few days of glory. We also need to spread the word of peace and compassion for fellow human beings among our friends, family and people in our circles of influence. The harder we work at it, the faster the time will come for the Glory of God to be established and the final triumph of peace on earth.

(Falahud Din Shams)



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